THE MESSAGE OF MAHATMA GANDHI

Compiled and edited by

U. S. MOHAN RAO

PUBLICATIONS DIVISION

Promoting a proper understanding of Mahatma Gandhi's views on religion and on the social, economic, political and other such problems of India would be perhaps the best way of celebrating his birth centenary. This volume seeks to help such understanding by presenting the cream of Gandhiji's teachings so arranged as to read like essays on eight important themes. For those whose interest impels them to further research, a key to the sources of the quotations is provided at the end of the book.

THE MESSAGE OF MAHATMA GANDHI

Published on the Occasion of the
Birth Centenary of Mahatma Gandhi

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Compiled and edited by
U. S. Mohan Rao

PUBLICATIONS DIVISION
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
Government of India

October 2, 1968 (10 Asvina 1890)

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PUBLISHED BY THE DIRECTOR, PUBLICATIONS DIVISION, PATIALA HOUSE, NEW DELHI-1 AND PRINTED BY THE MANAGER, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS, FARIDABAD.

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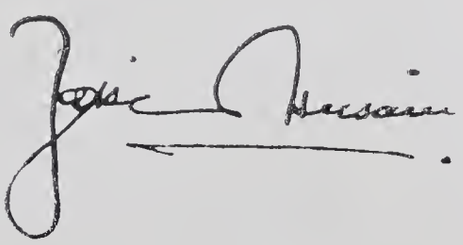
RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN
NEW DELHI-4
September 2, 1968

I am glad to know that Shri U. S. Mohan Rao has compiled and edited an anthology on the "Message of Mahatma Gandhi". In making this anthology the compiler's aim and effort has been to present the message of the Master both as a coherent system of values and as a series of specific instructions addressed to his followers during the freedom struggle. In the result it is hoped that Gandhiji's teachings will be found to have been apt and acceptable at the time and also to embody a philosophy of life possessing enduring relevance at all times and in all circumstances. Based on a fresh study of the rich material from the vantage point of "twenty years after", the selections by their choice and arrangement seek to present both the familiar and less known passages in an effective sequence. I hope it will be widely read.



INTRODUCTION

In this brief anthology, culled from Gandhiji's voluminous writings and speeches, the compiler's aim and effort has been to present the message of the Master both as a coherent system of values and as a series of specific do's and don'ts addressed to various sections of his followers during the freedom struggle. In the result it is hoped that the Message will be found to have been apt and acceptable when the words were uttered and at the same time to embody a philosophy of life possessing enduring relevance at all times and in all circumstances. Based on a fresh study of the rich material from the vantage point of "twenty years after" the selections by their choice and arrangement seek to present both the familiar and less known passages in an effective sequence.

Owing to various causes, the idea persists today that while Gandhiji was admirable as a leader of the masses and a saintly person, his ideas on politics, economics, education and social problems were obscurantist and outmoded and have no relevance today in our fast moving world of science and technology.

How mistaken this notion is can be found only by studying Gandhi's writings and trying to gather the essence of his teaching. In the history of mankind there have been great saints, philosophers, thinkers, scientists, statesmen and political leaders whose contributions in their own fields have been outstanding. But Gandhiji was unique, because while he was actively leading a mass struggle for freeing his country from foreign rule, he conceived *swaraj* at once in individual and political terms and tried through reflection and experiment to evolve a philosophy of life which would have permanent validity. The solutions which he offered for social

problems were often breath-taking by their very simplicity, and made many people doubt their efficacy.

The Gandhi Centenary has aroused world-wide interest in Gandhiji's life and teachings. A proper study of these points to the conclusion that, while Gandhiji was idealistic in his approach, he was eminently pragmatic in the translation of his ideals into practice; that while his belief in fundamental principles like Truth and Non-violence was unshakable, his application of these principles was governed by a continuous process of experimentation and developed by practice; and that his methods of conflict-resolution had no finality about them and could be improved by further experimentation.

In short, Gandhi was a social scientist who tried to analyse the ills of society and find a cure for them in the context of all the facts and personalities involved. If at all, his ideas are in advance of the times, and may for that very reason appear impracticable.

God Alone Is

The selections are grouped under eight sections. The first section gives Gandhiji's conception of God and his undying faith in the existence of God: "God is, was and ever shall be." God for him is not an external entity, but an abiding presence in the human heart. Fullest life is impossible without belief in a Living Law, in obedience to which the whole universe moves. A man without faith in God is like a drop thrown out of the ocean and bound to perish. If we have faith in the living God, all will be well with us. "That which impels man to do the right is God. The sum total of all that lives is God."

The greatest source of strength for Gandhiji was this absolute faith in God. He felt that he was only a tiny instrument in His hands who alone knew how to make use of him

and in what manner and to what extent. His faith in God turned brighter and firmer with every trial he faced. "I have never found Him lacking in response", he said. "I have found Him nearest at hand when the horizon seemed darkest —in my ordeals in gaols, when it was not all smooth sailing for me. I cannot recall a single moment in my life when I had a sense of desertion by God."

Truth and Non-Violence

Truth and non-violence, the two basic teachings of Gandhiji, are presented in the second section. These find full expression in every thought, word and deed of his. His unqualified loyalty to truth did not stop with mere declaration. He gave it his most earnest thought, and practised it with a singleness of devotion, until he was convinced and proclaimed to the world : *Truth is God.* Although his love for his country was total, he would not purchase even its freedom at the cost of Truth. "I would far rather that India perished than that she won freedom at the sacrifice of Truth."

Truth and ahimsa are inseparable : "They are like two sides of a coin, or rather a smooth unstamped metallic disc. A seeker after Truth had necessarily to follow the path of non-violence even as *ahimsa* could not be realised without the strictest adherence to truth. "Not violence, not untruth, but Non-violence, Truth is the law of our being." Therefore, everyone should consciously recognize and adopt non-violence (which is already inherent in us) in order to realize the ultimate Truth. "I have been pleading for the last fifty years for a conscious acceptance of the law and its zealous practice." For Gandhiji, non-violence did not mean non-injury alone. It was a positive force—the universal law of love.

Whether for individuals or for nations, therefore, their

emancipation lies in their scrupulously following the path of *ahimsa,* which is not meant merely for rishis or saints, but for the common people as well.

He wholly disapproved the doctrine that the end justified the means. The purity of motive can never be a substitute for the purity of means. The ahimsa that Gandhiji preached and practised so successfully all his life is not a quality that he associated with weakness or helplessness. Non-violence is the summit of bravery. It has no room for cowardice or even weakness. He would prefer violence to cowardice for "there is hope for a violent man to be some day non-violent, but there is none for a coward."

The lesson to learn from his life and teachings is that one must bear no ill-will or enmity towards any person. No individual should be regarded as an enemy. It is the poison within him that we should fight and which we must put an end to.

Gandhiji made no distinction between the morality of individual conduct and the morality of groups and nations. If violence is bad between individuals, it is equally bad between nations. In *satyagraha,* which is based on truth and non-violence, the personality of the exploiter is given due respect. At the moment of triumph, neither the stigma of defeat nor the pride of conquest is felt.

Gandhiji's faith in the power of love and suffering was indeed deep. The most decent and effective way of converting one's opponent to one's point of view is by means of gentleness and persuasion, and not by coercion. In the propagation of truth, it would therefore be wrong to inflict punishment on others, but it would surely be right to suffer in our own person for a course of action which we hold to be right. Self-suffering becomes a guarantee of the sincerity of one's own opinions. This method has the additional merit

of helping us to correct ourselves if we happen to be in the wrong. The non-violent way is thus the way of democracy.

Under violence there is no real safety. It leads to a race for armaments or a helpless dependence on more powerfully armed groups. Under non-violence strength comes from the will to suffer, which is not dependent on physical equipment. It can be acquired even by the smallest social group, howsoever helpless it might seem to be. "Just as one must learn the art of killing in the training for violence, so one must learn the art of dying in the training for non-violence." While the aim of war is to inflict punishment on the opponent so as to reduce him by fear to obey the will of the conqueror, the aim of *satyagraha* is to convert the wrong-doer and then enlist his support in building up a new and juster social order. "The end of non-violent war is always an agreement, never dictation, much less humiliation of the opponent."

A non-violent army is open to all those who accept the implications of non-violence and make up an ever-increasing endeavour to observe them. "There never will be an army of perfectly non-violent people. It will be formed of those who will honestly endeavour to observe non-violence."

During the various *satyagraha* campaigns organized by Gandhiji he had to lead masses of men and women spread over a vast country. It was not an easy task to control them and train them to the non-violent way of action. "And yet it is a marvel the way they have responded."

Satyagraha, based on truth and non-violence, is new in the sense that its large-scale application for the removal of social and political wrongs has been attempted for the first time in human history. Imperfections in its use at some stages or at some quarters were, considering the magnitude of the experiment, inevitable. But that does not mean that the experiment itself has failed and should be given up.

Beliefs and Values

The interest of the third section, Beliefs and Values, is largely autobiographical. "My life is one indivisible whole, and all my activities run into one another, and they all have their rise in my insatiable love of mankind." Loving the meanest of creation as himself, Gandhiji claimed nothing exclusively divine, no prophetship. He was "but a humble seeker after truth and bent upon finding it." His life was a continuous *sadhana* for the realization of Truth—not abstract truth, but such truth as can be realized in human relations. "And in my search, I take all fellow-seekers in uttermost confidence so that I may know my mistakes and correct them."

It was a slow, uphill climb all the way, the vision widening at every step, till at the end he seemed a superman. If his example and precept inspired millions of men and women, it was because his life was an open book. He had no secrets, and he did not encourage any.

Passion for Truth was the dominating urge in his life and it gave him immense power over the minds and hearts of men. It was this passion that led to his insistence on purity of means and his freedom from attachment to predetermined ends. The same passion also led him to confess publicly his errors—Himalayan or trivial.

One form of untruth is injustice. "That is why my devotion to Truth has drawn me into the field of politics; and I can say without the slightest hesitation and yet in all humility, that those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means."

For Gandhiji therefore religion and morality were one and the same. This was natural, for Gandhiji was essentially a *karma yogi*—a man of action. Religious activity could not be separated from other activities of life.

The Soul of all Religions is One

It is essential that one should have the same respect for other religions as one has for one's own, for "religions are not for separating men from one another, they are meant to bind them". This is the message of the fourth section. Gandhiji declared that "Truth is the exclusive property of no single scripture."

Gandhiji's Hinduism was based on the ethics of the *Ramayana* and the insights of the *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavad Gita.* He moulded his life in accordance with these basic teachings. He held that good works lead to purity of mind and so to the vision of God. "I am endeavouring to see God through service of humanity, for I know God is neither in heaven, nor down below, but in everyone."

Although Gandhiji remained essentially a Hindu, he studied with reverence the scriptures of other religions. The lofty ethics of the Sermon on the Mount, like the spirit of brotherhood taught by Islam, became part of his life. And so did the message of love, gentleness, and peace in Buddhism.

Time and again he proclaimed the truth of universality of all religions and actually practised and proved this truth in his own life.

It followed that attempts at "conversion" were abhorrent to him. Instead, he declared : "We must help a Hindu to become a better Hindu, a Mussalman to become a better Mussalman, and a Christian to become a better Christian. We must eradicate from our midst the secret pride that our religion is more true and that another's is less so. Our attitude towards all other religions must be absolutely clear and sincere."

Gandhiji believed that prayer was the very soul and essence of religion and, therefore, prayer must be the very core of the

life of man, for it is the only means of bringing about discipline and harmony in our daily life.

Daridranarayan

Gandhiji's concern for the poor and the down-trodden and his exhortations for the betterment of their lot form the theme of the fifth section entitled *Daridranarayan.* His compassion for the struggling masses was neither patronising nor sentimental. It was a total identification with them which resulted in incessant thinking and working for their uplift.

He was convinced that poverty was not the inevitable lot of the majority of human beings. His ideal was that wealth should be equitably distributed among those who have produced it. No peasant or labourer should be denied the essentials of living—food, clothing and a roof to live under. These necessities should be ensured for the common man.

He was opposed to the exploitation in any form. He directed all his energy towards removing the economic inequality and social injustice he saw all around him.

He unambiguously declared that he made no distinction whatever between foreign and indigenous capitalism. As he was a firm believer in non-violence, he was, of course, against the physical liquidation of capitalists. Yet he was convinced that exploitation must end. This was possible if the capitalists acted as trustees of the workers. According to him the workers were "as much the proprietors of their mills as the share-holders, and when the mill-owners realize that the mill-hands are as much mill-owners as they, there will be no quarrel between them." He wanted to bring about an equalization of status. "The working classes have all these centuries been isolated and relegated to a lower status. They should realise that labour is also capital. As soon as labourers are properly

educated and organized, and they realise their strength, no amount of capital can subdue them." He, however, held that there need be no clash between capital and labour, since each was dependent on the other. What was essential was "that the capitalist should not lord it over the labourer."

What if the rich capitalists do not act as trustees and continue to exploit the poor workers ? *Satyagraha* was the right and infallible answer. The non-violent method would destroy not the capitalist, but capitalism, for the capitalist would regard himself as a trustee for those on whom he depends for the making, the retention and the increase of his capital. Gandhiji thought that "charity" degraded both the recipient and the giver.

Gandhiji was not against machinery as such. It was the "craze for machinery" which he was opposed. "I would prize every invention of science made for the benefit of all," he said. But he was opposed to machine that would displace human labour and concentrate power in a few hands, and their indiscriminate multiplication. He refused to be lured by "the seeming triumph of machinery".

He, however, recognized the need for "heavy machinery for work of public utility which cannot be undertaken by human labour." But being a socialist he would insist that all such heavy industries which employ large numbers of people should be nationalized or state-controlled. They should work for the benefit of the people.

"God created man to work for his food and said that those who ate without work were thieves." Tolstoy's writings on bread labour confirmed the idea which Gandhiji had conceived on reading Ruskin's *Unto This Last.* He found further sanction for it in the third chapter of *Bhagavad Gita,* where it is said that he who eats without offering sacrifice eats stolen food. Gandhiji interpreted that "sacrifice" in the context

could only mean body labour or bread labour. All men, whatever their special aptitudes and abilities may be, must subject themselves to the law of bread labour. It is the law of life and it is the necessary condition for the health, happiness and contentment of the individual. He traced many of our present-day social ills to the non-observance of this law.

It may be said that for millions of people life already meant only toil and semi-starvation. The real cause for such a state of affairs was that theirs was not voluntary obedience to the law of bread labour. "Compulsory obedience to the law of bread labour breeds poverty, disease and discontent. It is a state of slavery. Willing obedience to it must bring contentment and health. And it is health that is real wealth." No one, not even a millionnaire, can live without some physical labour or exercise. "If everyone, whether rich or poor, has thus to take exercise in some shape or form, why should it not assume the form of productive labour, *i.e.*, bread labour ?" By precept and example he stressed the dignity of labour. And he considered no labour that was socially useful as degrading.

For the Well-Being of the Nation

Although Gandhiji had goodwill for all humanity, he had a special attraction to the land of his birth. India was dear because she had represented throughout the ages certain eternal truths. This theme runs through the sixth section which is further divided into sub-sections touching on various aspects of this theme.

Unity of India

Gandhiji was the great unifier of this country. He declared that all those who live here, to whatever religion they may belong, are equal sharers in their common home and its

great inheritance, having equal rights and obligations. Religion was a personal matter between man and his God. "In the sense of nationality they are Indians first and Indians last, no matter what religion they profess." His death symbolized to this message of large-hearted tolerance and unity.

He warned that re-distribution of the States on linguistic lines should not militate against the organic unity of India. "If each province begins to look upon itself as a separate, sovereign unit, India's independence will lose its meaning, and with it will vanish the freedom of the various units as well." The world outside did not know us as Gujaratis, Maharashtrians, Tamilians, etc., but only as Indians. "We must therefore, resolutely discourage all fissiparous tendencies and feel and behave as Indians." He accepted provincialism of a healthy type, otherwise there would be no meaning in having separate states. "But our provincialism must never be narrow or exclusive. It should be conducive to the interest of the whole country of which the provinces are but parts.... Everything that the provinces do must be for the glory of the whole."

India of His Dreams

He was appalled at the poverty and the degrading living conditions of millions of people and he spent every ounce of his energy in improving their lot. He wanted everyone of the 400 million people inhabiting this land, to have the minimum necessaries of life and to have an equal right to the opportunities and blessings that free India had to offer.

Ghandhiji was convinced that India did not live in the towns and cities, but in her seven lakh villages. He had great faith in the Indian peasant and regarded him as the salt of the earth and sheet-anchor of democracy.

Gandhiji viewed the rapid growth of towns and cities with great concern and regarded it as an unhealthy sign of the times.

He was pained to see the cities exploiting the villages and he felt hurt at the patronizing and condescending attitude of the town-bred intellectuals towards the simple villagers. He was firmly convinced that, if India was to attain true freedom, the fact must be recognized that people would have to live in villages not in towns, in huts, not in palaces. "Crores of people will never be able to live at peace with each other in towns and palaces. They will then have no recourse but to resort to both violence and untruth." Truth and non-violence can be fully realized only in the simplicity of village life.

The vastness of our country and its population, its geographical situation and climatic conditions have, according to Gandhiji, destined her for a rural civilization. At present this civilization has great many defects, but they are remedial. In an all-out effort, to get rid of these acknowledged defects, the more educated among the younger generation should settle down to village life and teach the village-folk "how to economize time, health and money." For years we have been exploiting them. As a result the villages today are in a condition of decay. "The task before every lover of the country is how to prevent this decay, or which is the same thing, how to reconstruct the village of India so that it may be easy for everyone to live in them."

He was distressed to find even the villagers—the educated section among them—succumbing to the temptations of urban life and flocking to the cities. He therefore concentrated on reviving the village arts and industries so that the villages could become self-sufficient and self-reliant. The villager should learn to depend for his necessaries on the villages themselves and not on the cities.

The wealth to be seen in the cities of India came from the blood of the poor villagers. "Being a villager myself, I know the condition in the villages. I know village economics. I

tell you that the pressure from the top crushes those at the bottom. All that is necessary is to get off their backs."

Hence the importance he attached to the spinning wheel and khadi. To some, the spinning wheel may appear to be a ridiculous economic device. It would no doubt have been so if Gandhiji had advocated it as the *only* means of livelihood for the Indian villager. He never said anything of the kind. His intention was to restore spinning to its ancient position as a universal industry auxiliary to agriculture, resorted to by the village folk when they have time to spare from agricultural operations. Gandhiji said that the spinning wheel would help the villager to add a little his meagre subsistence and effect a saving on his clothing.

The cottage industry of spinning had been flourishing all over the country before the British came and destroyed it. Gandhiji only wanted it to be revived. Far from being a return to a forgotten and antiquated craft, Gandhiji regarded it as a natural practical and ready method by which millions could make a supplementary income and at the same time reduce the drain of wealth from the country.

"Khadi to me, is the symbol of unity of Indian humanity, of its economic freedom and equality and, therefore, ultimately in the poetic expression of Jawaharlal Nehru, 'the livery of India's freedom'."

Democracy

In order to enjoy real freedom, we should learn the secret of observing voluntary discipline. "Voluntary discipline is the first requisite of corporate freedom". Without discipline, tolerance and respect for each other, a democratic way of life would be impossible. "The highest form of freedom

carries with it the greatest measure of discipline and humility." "A born democrat is a born disciplinarian."

Gandhiji valued individual freedom but man being essentially a social being, should exercise his freedom to act with great restraint. It would be wholly wrong and undemocratic for individuals to take the law into their own hands in the name of the liberty of the individual. "That way lies destruction of liberty."

"If we want to cultivate a true spirit of democracy we cannot afford to be intolerant. Intolerance betrays want of faith in one's cause." It is itself a form of violence and an obstacle to the growth of a true democratic spirit. One should always be prepared to listen to one's opponent. While it is necessary that we should act fearlessly according to our convictions, "we must always keep an open mind and be ever ready to find that what we believed to be truth was, after all, untruth. This openness of mind strengthens the truth in us and removes the dross from it, if any." No one can claim a monopoly of right judgment. We are prone to commit mistakes and very often we are obliged to revise our opinions, or our earlier decisions. Although individuals or sections of people should have the liberty and opportunity to express their honest thoughts, we owe to ourselves as to others that we "try to understand the opponent's view-point, and, if we cannot accept it, respect it as fully as we expect him to respect ours."

True democracy according to Gandhiji can never come through untruthful and violent means. "The spirit of democracy cannot be imposed from without. It has to come from within." In a democracy the weakest should have the same opportunity as the strongest. "That can never happen except through non-violence. No country in the world today shows any but patronising regard for the weak."

Untouchability

For the untouchables, whom he named Harijans, Gandhiji felt the deepest concern and did the greatest service. The removal of untouchability became one of the most important missions of Gandhiji's life. "What I want, what I am living for, and what I should delight in dying for is the eradication of untouchability root and branch." He thought that this poison must have entered into our society, when it was at its lowest ebb; and the evil had continued to remain with us.

He refused to enter temples to which Harijans were not allowed to enter.

Women

Gandhiji's respect for womanhood was one of the outstanding traits in his character. He regarded woman as the embodiment of sacrifice and suffering. "*Ahimsa* means infinite love, which again means infinite capacity for suffering. Who but woman, the mother of man, shows this capacity in the largest measure ?" He thought that Hindu culture had erred "on the side of excessive subordination of the wife to the husband, and has insisted on the complete merging of the wife in the husband. This has resulted in the husband sometimes usurping and exercising authority that reduces him to the level of the brute."

Gandhiji was uncompromising with regard to women's rights. He felt that a woman should not suffer any legal disability not suffered by man. Daughters and sons should be treated on a footing of perfect equality.

National Language

Gandhiji firmly believed that the medium of instruction in our schools and colleges should be through the respective regional languages, and that Hindi should be adopted as the

language of common communication for the country. He declared that Hindustani—"an amalgamation of simple Hindi and simple Urdu"—could alone be the language of the common man and that it would be the best suited inter-provincial language for all Indians. "I would stick to Hindustani even if I have to stand alone."

For the Good of the Individual

The instinct to do good is always within us, only we have to develop it by proper means. "The highest moral law is that we should unremittingly work for the good of mankind." says the seventh section of this compilation. Self-less service of fellow-men is the noblest aim of life. One should realize that the good of others is intimately linked up with one's own good. A person who lives in the service of others will have little time to think of himself and of his comforts. "If we grasp the fact that there is Divinity within us, we shall cease to have any other fear on the face of the earth save the fear of God." This realization would enable us to face the problems of life with humility and fortitude and without fear.

Gandhiji felt that though a certain degree of physical harmony and comfort was necessary, "the satisfaction of one's physical needs, even the intellectual needs of one's narrow self, must meet at a certain point a dead stop, before it degenerates into physical and intellectual voluptuousness."

"The mind is a restless bird, the more it gets the more it wants, and still remains unsatisfied." Man's happiness really lies in contentment.

He therefore attached the greatest importance to the observance of *Brahmacharya.* He defined it thus : "That conduct which puts one in touch with God. The conduct consists in the fullest control over all the senses. This is the true

and relevant meaning of the word." He said that absolute renunciation would be the ideal state. "If you dare not think of it, marry by all means, but even then live a life of self-control."

The Human Family

Gandhiji's life and teachings have a universal appeal. He was essentially a religious and a moral force appealing to the conscience of man. He did not make any distinctions between religions, nations or races. And thus he became the great internationalist, believing in the essential unity of man and the underlying unity of all nations. In the eighth and last section, Gandhiji says : "God having cast my lot in the midst of the people of India, I should be untrue to my maker if I failed to serve them. If I do not know how to serve them I shall never know how to serve humanity. And I cannot possibly go wrong so long as I do not harm other nations in the act of serving my country."

His philosophy of non-violence would not permit of exclusive possession either by an individual or by a nation. If India was for him the chosen land, it was because he felt that she would lead the world in the art of self-sacrifice.

I. GOD ALONE IS

There is an indefinable mysterious power that pervades everything. I feel it, though I do not see it. It is this unseen power that makes itself felt and yet defies proof, because it is so unlike all that I perceive through my senses. It transcends reason. But it is possible to reason out the existence of God to a limited extent.[1]

I do dimly perceive that whilst everything around me is ever changing, ever dying, there is underlying all that change a living power that is changeless, that holds all together, that creates, dissolves and recreates. That informing power or spirit is God. And since nothing else I see merely through the senses can or will persist, He alone *is*.

And is this power benevolent or malevolent? I see it as purely benevolent, for I can see that in the midst of death life persists, in the midst of untruth truth persists, in the midst of darkness light persists. Hence I gather that God is Life, Truth, Light. He is Love. He is the supreme Good.[2]

God is that indefinable something which we all feel but which we do not know. To me God is Truth and Love; God is ethics and morality. God is fearlessness. God is the source of Light and Life and yet He is above and beyond all these. God is conscience. He is even the atheism of the atheist.... He transcends speech and reason.... He is a personal God to those who need His personal presence. He is embodied in those who need His touch. He is the purest Essence. He simply *is* to those who have faith. He is all things to all men. He is in us and yet

above and beyond us.... He is long-suffering. He is patient but He is also terrible... With Him ignorance is no excuse. And withal He is ever forgiving for He always gives us the chance to repent. He is the greatest democrat the world knows, for He leaves us 'unfettered' to make our own choice between evil and good. He is the greatest tyrant ever known; for He often dashes the cup from our lips and under the cover of free will leaves us a margin so wholly inadequate as to provide only mirth for Himself... Therefore Hinduism calls it all His sport.[3]

God will not be God if He allowed Himself to be an object of proof by His creatures. But He does give His willing slave the power to pass through the fiercest of ordeals. I have been a willing slave to this most exacting Master for more than half a century. His voice has been increasingly audible, as years have rolled by. He has never foresaken me even in my darkest hour. He has saved me often against myself and left me not a vestige of independence. The greater the surrender to Him, the greater has been my joy.[4]

There are numerous phenomena from which you can reason out the existence of God, but I shall not insult your intelligence by offering you a rational explanation of that type. I would have you brush aside all rational explanations and begin with a simple child-like faith in God. If I exist, God exists. With me it is a necessity of my being, as it is with millions.[5]

If a man has really heard the voice of God, there is no sliding back, just as there is no forgetting it by one who has learnt to swim. The listening in must make people's lives daily richer and richer.

This listening in presupposes the fitness to listen, and the fitness is acquired after constant and patient striving and waiting on God. Shankaracharya has likened the process to the attempt to empty the sea by means of a drainer small as the point of a blade of grass. This process thus necessarily is endless, being carried through birth after birth. And yet the effort has to be natural as breathing or winking of the eyes, which processes happen without our knowing them. The effort coincides with the process of living. I commend to you this process of eternal striving which alone can take us face to face with God.[6]

Our existence as embodied beings is purely momentary; what are a hundred years in eternity ? But if we shatter the chains of egotism, and melt into the ocean of humanity, we share its dignity. To feel that we are something is to set up a barrier between God and ourselves; to cease feeling that we are something is to become one with God. A drop in the ocean partakes of the greatness of its parent, although it is unconscious of it. But it is dried up as soon as it enters upon an existence independent of the ocean. We do not exaggerate when we say that life is a mere bubble.

A life of service must be one of humility. He who could sacrifice his life for others, has hardly time to reserve for himself a place in the sun. Inertia must not be mistaken for humility, as it has been in Hinduism. True humility means most strenuous and constant endeavour entirely directed towards the service of humanity. God is continuously in action without resting for a single moment. If we could serve Him or become one with Him, our activity must be as unwearied as His. There may be momentary rest in store for the drop which is separated from the ocean, but not for the drop in the ocean, which knows no rest. The same is

the case with ourselves. As soon as we become one with the ocean in the shape of God, there is no more rest for us, nor indeed do we need rest any longer. Our very sleep is action. For we sleep with the thought of God in our hearts. This restlessness constitutes true rest. This never-ceasing agitation holds the key to peace ineffable. This supreme state of total surrender is difficult to describe, but not beyond the bounds of human experience. It has been attained by many dedicated souls, and may be attained by ourselves as well.[7]

The purpose of life is undoubtedly to know oneself. We cannot do it unless we learn to identify ourselves with all that lives. The sum-total of that life is God. Hence the necessity of realizing God living within everyone of us. The instrument of this knowledge is boundless, selfless service.[8]

I implicitly believe in the truth of the saying that not a blade of grass moves but by His will. . . .[9]

I cannot account for the existence of evil by any rational method. To want to do so is to be co-equal with God. I am, therefore, humble enough to recognize evil as such. And I call God long-suffering and patient, precisely because He permits evil in the world. I know that He has no evil in Him, and yet if there is evil, He is the author of it and yet untouched by it.

I know, too, that I shall never know God if I do not wrestle with and against evil even at the cost of life itself. I am fortified in the belief by my own humble and limited experience. The purer I try to become, the nearer I feel to be to God. How much more should I be when my faith is not a mere apology, as it is today, but has become as immovable as the Himalayas and as white and bright as the

snows on their peaks ? Meanwhile, I pray with Newman who sang from experience :

"Lead, Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on;
The night is dark and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on;
Keep Thou my feet, I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me."[10]

God is the hardest task-master I have known on earth, and he tries you through and through. And when you find that your faith is failing or your body is failing you, and you are sinking, He comes to your assistance somehow or other and proves to you that you must not lose your faith and that He is always at your beck and call, but on His terms, not on your terms.[11]

God is great and compassionate. He would not try His servants beyond endurance.[12]

As we go forward in our journey of life, we have always problems coming up for decision, and they are the hardest when the voice of Satan nearly approaches the voice of God. Only fullest trust (in God) and perfect purity and extreme humility can lead us to the right choice.[13]

In my early youth I was taught to repeat what in Hindu scriptures are known as the one thousand names of God. But these one thousand names of God were by no means exhaustive. We believe, and I think it is the truth, that God has as many names as there are creatures. Therefore, we also say that God is nameless, and since God has many forms, we consider Him formless, and since He speaks through

many tongues, we consider Him to be speechless and so on. And, so, when I came to study Islam, I found Islam too had many names of God.

I would say with those who say 'God is love,' God is Love. But deep down in me I used to say that though God may be Love, God is Truth above all. If it is possible for the human tongue to give the fullest description of God, I have come to the conclusion that God is Truth. Two years ago I went a step further and said that Truth is God. You will see the fine distinction between the two statements, 'God is Truth' and 'Truth is God'. I came to that conclusion after a continuous and relentless search after Truth which began fifty years ago. I then found that the nearest approach to truth was through love. But I also found that love has many meanings in the English language, and that human love in the sense of passion could become a degrading thing. I found, too, that love in the sense of *ahimsa* had only a limited number of votaries in the world. But I never found a double meaning in connection with truth and even atheists have not demurred to the necessity of power of truth. But in their passion for discovering truth, atheists have not hesitated to deny the very existence of God—from their own point of view rightly. It was because of this reasoning that I saw that rather than say that God is Truth, I should say Truth is God..... Add to this the great difficulty, that millions have taken the name of God and in His name committed nameless atrocities. Not that the scientists very often do not commit atrocities in the name of Truth..... Then we have another thing in Hindu philosophy, namely, God alone is and nothing else exists and the same truth you see emphasized and exemplified in the *Kalma* of Islam. There you find it clearly stated that God alone is, and nothing else exists. In fact, the Sanskrit word for truth is a word

which literally means that which exists, *Sat*. For these and many other reasons, I have come to the conclusion that the definition—Truth is God—gives me the greatest satisfaction. And when you want to find Truth as God, the only inevitable means is love, that is non-violence, and since I believe that ultimately the means and ends are convertible terms, I should not hesitate to say that God is Love.

When then is Truth ? A difficult question; but I have solved it for myself by saying that it is what the voice within tells you. How then, you ask, (do) different people think of different and contrary truths ? Well, seeing that the human mind works through innumerable media and that the evolution of the human mind is not the same for all, it follows that what may be truth for one may be untruth for another, and hence those who have made these experiments have come to the conclusion that there are certain conditions to be observed in making those experiments.....

It is because we have at the present moment everybody claiming the right of conscience without going through any discipline whatsoever, that there is so much untruth being delivered to a bewildered world. All that I can, in true humility, present to you is that Truth is not to be found by anybody who has not got an abundant sense of humility. If you would swim on the bosom of the ocean of Truth, you must reduce yourself to a zero.[14]

Where there is Truth, there also is knowledge which is true. Where there is no Truth, there can be no true knowledge. That is why the word *Chit* or knowledge is associated with the name of God. And where there is true knowledge, there is always bliss (*Anand*). There sorrow has no place. And even as Truth is eternal, so is the bliss derived from it. Hence we know God as *Sat—Chit—*

Anand, one who combines in himself Truth, Knowledge and Bliss.[15]

Out of Truth emanate love, tenderness, and humility. A votary of Truth has to be humble as the dust. His humility increases with his observance of Truth. I see this every moment of my life. I have a much more vivid sense of Truth and of my own littleness than I had a year ago. The wonderful implication of the great truth *'Brahma Satyam Jaganmithya'* (Brahma is real, all else unreal) grows on me from day to day. It teaches us patience. This will purge us of harshness and add to our tolerance. It will make us magnify the mole-hills of our errors into mountains and minimize the mountains of others' errors into mole-hills. The body persists because of egoism. The utter extinction of the body or egoism is *moksha.* He who has achieved this will be the very image of Truth or one may call it *Brahman.* Therefore, the loving name of God is *Dasanudasa* (Servant of Servants). Wife, children, friends, possessions—all should be held subservient to Truth. Each one of these should be sacrified in search for Truth.[16]

II. TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE

Ahimsa and Truth are so intertwined that it is practically impossible to disentangle and separate them. They are like two sides of a coin, or rather a smooth unstamped metallic disc. Who can say, which is the obverse, and which the reverse ? Nevertheless, *ahimsa* is the means; Truth is the end. Means to be means must always be within our reach, and so, *ahimsa* is our supreme duty. If we take care of the means, we are bound to reach the end sooner or later. When once we have grasped this point, final victory is beyond question. Whatever difficulties we encounter, whatever apparent reverses we sustain, we may not give up the quest for Truth which alone is, being God himself.[1]

Ahimsa is not the goal. Truth is the goal. But we have no means of realizing Truth in human relationship except through the practice of *ahimsa*. A steadfast pursuit of *ahimsa* is inevitably bound to truth—not so violence. That is why I swear by *ahimsa*. Truth came naturally to me. *Ahimsa* I acquired after a struggle.

But *ahimsa* being the means, we are naturally more concerned with it in our everyday life. It is *ahimsa*, therefore, that our masses have to be educated in. Education in truth follows from it as a natural end.[2]

Ahimsa is my God, and Truth is my God. When I look for *ahimsa*, Truth says 'Find it out through me'. When I look for Truth, *ahimsa* says, 'Find it out through me.'[3]

I have nothing new to teach the world. Truth and non-

violence are as old as the hills. All I have done is to try experiments in both on as vast a scale as I could do. In doing so I have sometimes erred and learnt by my errors. Life and its problems have thus become to me so many experiments in the practice of truth and non-violence.

By instinct I have been truthful, but not non-violent. As a Jain *muni* once rightly said, I was not so much a votary of *ahimsa* as I was of truth, and I put the latter in the first place and the former in the second. For, as he put it, I was capable of sacrificing non-violence for the sake of truth. In fact, it was in the course of my pursuit of truth that I discovered non-violence.[4]

I have been practising with scientific precision non-violence and its possibilities for an unbroken period of over 50 years. I have applied it in every walk of life, domestic, institutional, economic and political. I know of no single case in which it has failed. Where it has seemed sometimes to have failed, I have ascribed it to my imperfections. I claim no perfection for myself. But I do claim to be a passionate seeker after Truth, which is but another name for God. In the course of that search, the discovery of non-violence came to me. Its spread is my life's mission. I have no interest in living except for the prosecution of that mission.[5]

I . . . . have ventured to place before India the ancient law of self-sacrifice. For *satyagraha* and its offshoots, non-cooperation and civil resistance are nothing but new names for the law of suffering.

The *rishis*, who discovered the law of non-violence in the midst of violence, were greater geniuses than Newton. They were themselves greater warriors than Wellington. Having

themselves known the use of arms, they realized their uselessness, and taught a weary world that its salvation lay not through violence but through non-violence.

Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means putting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant. Working under this law of our being, it is possible for a single individual to defy the whole might of an unjust empire to save his honour, his religion, his soul, and lay the foundation for that empire's fall or its regeneration.

And so I am not pleading for India to practise non-violence because it is weak. I want her to practise non-violence being conscious of her strength and power. No training in arms is required for realization of her strength. We seem to need it, because we seem to think that we are but a lump of flesh.

I want India to recognize that she has a soul that cannot perish and that can rise triumphant above every physical weakness and defy the physical combination of a whole world.[6]

If we turn our eyes to the time of which history has any record down to our own times, we shall find that man has been steadily progressing towards *ahimsa*. Our remote ancestors were cannibals. Then came a time when they were fed up with cannibalism and they began to live on chase. Next came a stage when man was ashamed of leading the life of a wandering hunter. He therefore took to agriculture and depended principally on mother earth for his food. Thus from being a nomad he settled down to civilized stable life, founded villages and towns, and from member of a family he became member of a community and a nation.

All these are signs of progressive *ahimsa* and diminishing *himsa*. Had it been otherwise, the human species should have been extinct by now even as many of the lower species have disappeared.

Prophets and *avatars* have also taught the lesson of *ahimsa* more or less. Not one of them has professed to teach *himsa*. And how should it be otherwise? *Himsa* does not need to be taught. Man as animal is violent, but as spirit he is non-violent; the moment he awakes to the spirit within, he cannot remain violent. Either he progresses towards *ahimsa* or rushes to his doom. That is why the prophets and *avatars* have taught the lesson of truth, harmony, brotherhood, justice, etc.—all attributes of *ahimsa*.[7]

I claim that even now, though the social structure is not based on a conscious acceptance of non-violence, all the world over mankind lives and men retain their possessions on the sufferance of one another. If they had not done so, only the fewest and the most ferocious would have survived. But such is not the case. Families are bound together by ties of love, and so are groups in the so-called civilized society called nations. Only they do not recognize the supremacy of the law of non-violence. It follows, therefore, that they have not investigated its vast possibilities. Hitherto, out of sheer inertia, shall I say, we have taken it for granted that complete non-violence is possible only for the few who take the vow of non-possession and the allied abstinences. Whilst it is true that the votaries alone can carry on research work and declare from time to time the new possibilities of the great eternal law governing man, if it is a law, it must hold good for all. The many failures we see are not of the law but of the followers, many of whom do not even know that

they are under that law willy-nilly. When a mother dies for her child one unknowingly obeys the law. I have been pleading for the past fifty years for a conscious acceptance of the law and its zealous practice even in the face of failures. Fifty years of work has shown marvellous results and strengthened my faith. I do claim that by constant practice we shall come to a state of things when lawful possession will command universal and voluntary respect. No doubt such possession will not be tainted. It will not be an insolent demonstration of the inequalities that surround us everywhere. Nor need the problem of unjust and unlawful possession appal the votary of non-violence. He has at his disposal the non-violent weapon of *satyagraha* and non-cooperation which hitherto has been found to be a complete substitute of violence whenever it has been applied honestly in sufficient measure. I have never claimed to present the complete science of non-violence. It does not lend itself to such treatment. So far as I know, no single physical science does, not even the very exact science of mathematics. I am but a seeker.[8]

In this age of wonders no one will say that a thing or idea is worthless because it is new. To say it is impossible because it is difficult, is again not in consonance with the spirit of the age. Things undreamt of are daily being seen, the impossible is ever becoming possible. We are constantly being astonished these days at the amazing discoveries in the field of violence. But I maintain that far more undreamt of and seemingly impossible discoveries will be made in the field of non-violence.[9]

Non-violence is "not a resignation from all real fighting against wickedness". On the contrary, the non-violence of

my conception is a more active and real fight against wickedness than retaliation whose very nature is to increase wickedness. I contemplate a mental and therefore a moral opposition to immoralities. I seek entirely to blunt the edge of the tyrant's sword, not by putting up against it a sharper-edged weapon, but by disappointing his expectation that I would be offering physical resistance. The resistance of the soul that I should offer would elude him. It would at first dazzle him and at last compel recognition from him, which recognition would not humiliate him but would uplift him. It may be urged that this is an ideal state. And so it is.[10]

Non-violence is an active force of the highest order. It is soul-force or the power of Godhead within us. Imperfect man cannot grasp the whole of that Essence—he would not be able to bear its full blaze, but even an infinitesimal fraction of it, when it becomes active within us, can work wonders.[11]

Consciousness of the living presence of God within one is undoubtedly the first requisite.[12]

If one has...pride, egoism, there is no non-violence. Non-violence is impossible without humility....[13]

It was only when I had learnt to reduce myself to zero that I was able to evolve the power of *satyagraha* in South Africa.[14]

Non-violence does not require any outside or outward training. It simply requires the will not to kill even in retaliation and the courage to face death without revenge. This is no sermon on *ahimsa* but cold reason and the statement of

a universal law. Given the unquenchable faith in the law, no provocation should prove too great for the exercise of forbearance. This I have described as the non-violence of the brave.[15]

Love never claims, it ever gives. Love ever suffers, never resents, never revenges itself.[16]

Where there is love there is life, hatred leads to destruction.[17]

Love is the strongest force the world possesses and yet it is the humblest imaginable.[18]

I have no weapon but love to wield authority over anyone.[19]

I am not a visionary. I claim to be a practical idealist. The religion of non-violence is not meant merely for the *rishis* and saints. It is meant for the common people as well. Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute. The spirit lies dormant in the brute and he knows no law but that of physical might. The dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law—to the strength of the spirit.[20]

It has become the fashion these days to say that society cannot be organized or run on non-violent lines. I join issue on that point. In a family, when a father slaps his delinquent child, the latter does not think of retaliation. He obeys his father not because of the deterrent effect of the slap but because of the offended love which he senses behind it. That, in my opinion, is an epitome of the way in which

society is or should be governed. What is true of the family must be true of society which is but a larger family.[21]

My creed of non-violence is an extremely active force. It has no room for cowardice or even weakness. There is hope for a violent man to be some day non-violent, but there is none for a coward. I have therefore said more than once in these pages that if we do not know how to defend ourselves, our women and our places of worship by the force of suffering, *i.e.*, non-violence, we must, if we are men, be at least able to defend all these by fighting.[22]

I can no more preach non-violence to a coward than I can tempt a blind man to enjoy healthy scenes. Non-violence is the summit of bravery.[23]

If we are to be non-violent, we must then not wish for anything on this earth which the meanest or the lowest of human beings cannot have.[24]

If one does not practice non-violence in one's personal relations with others, and hopes to use it in bigger affairs, one is vastly mistaken. Non-violence like charity must begin at home.[25]

A *satyagraha* struggle is impossible without capital in the shape of character.[26]

Disobedience to be civil must be sincere, respectful, restrained, never defiant, must be based upon some well-understood principle, must not be capricious and above all, must have no ill-will or hatred behind it.[27]

In the application of *satyagraha,* I discovered in the earliest stages, that pursuit of Truth did not admit of violence being inflicted on one's opponent, but that he must be weaned from error by patience and sympathy. For, what appears to be truth to the one may appear to be error to the other. And patience means self-suffering. So the doctrine came to mean vindication of Truth, not by infliction of suffering on the opponent but one's own self.[28]

With *satya* combined with *ahimsa,* you can bring the world to your feet. *Satyagraha* in its essence is nothing but the introduction of truth and gentleness in the political, *i.e.*, the national life.[29]

By its very nature, non-violence cannot 'seize' power, nor can that be its goal. But non-violence can do more; it can effectively control and guide power without capturing the machinery of Government. That is its beauty.[30]

It is never the intention of a *satyagrahi* to embrass the wrong doer. The appeal is never to his fear; it is, must be, always to his heart. The *satyagrahi's* object is to convert, not to coerce the wrong-doer. He should avoid artificiality in all his doings. He acts naturally and from inward conviction.[31]

A *satyagrahi* must never forget the distinction between evil and the evil-doer. He must not harbour ill-will or bitterness against the latter... A *satyagrahi* will always try to overcome evil by good, anger by love, untruth by truth, *himsa* by *ahimsa.* There is no other way of purging the world of evil.[32]

Since *satyagraha* is one of the most powerful methods of direct action, a *satyagrahi* exhausts all other means before he resorts to *satyagraha*. He will therefore constantly and continually approach the constituted authority, he will appeal to public opinion, educate public opinion, state his case calmly and coolly before everybody, who wants to listen to him, and only after he has exhausted all these avenues will he resort to *satyagraha*. But when he has found the impelling call of the inner voice within him and launches out upon *satyagraha* he has burnt his boats and there is no receding.[33]

A *satyagrahi* goes to prison, not to embarrass the authorities but to convert them by demonstrating to them his innocence. You should realize that unless you have developed the moral fitness to go to prison, which the law of *satyagraha* demands, your jail-going will be useless and will bring you nothing but disappointment in the end.[34]

A *satyagrahi* bids goodbye to fear. He is therefore never afraid to trust the opponent. Even if the opponent plays him false twenty times, the *satyagrahi* is ready to trust him the twenty-first time, for an implicit trust in human nature is the very essence of his creed.[35]

Many have shaken their heads as they have said, "But you can't teach non-violence to the masses. It is only possible for individuals and that too in rare cases." That is, in my opinion, a gross self-deception. If mankind was not habitually non-violent, it would have been self-destroyed ages ago. But in the duel between forces of violence and non-violence, the latter have always come out victorious in the end.

The truth is that we have not had patience enough to

wait and apply ourselves wholeheartedly to the spread of non-violence among the people as a means for political ends.[36]

Q. How do you think that the masses can practise non-violence, when we know that they are all prone to anger, hate, ill-will ? They are known to fight for the most trivial things.

A. They are, and yet I think they can practise non-violence for the common good. Do you think that the thousands of women that collected contraband salt had ill-will against anyone ? They knew that the Congress or Gandhi had asked them to do certain things, and they did those things in faith and hope. To my mind the most perfect demonstration of non-violence was in Champaran. Did the thousands of ryots who rose up in revolt against the agrarian evils harbour the least ill-will against the Government or the planters ? Their belief in non-violence was unintelligent, even as the belief in the earth being round with many is unintelligent. But their belief in their leaders was genuine, and that was enough. With those who lead it is another matter. Their belief has got to be intelligent, and they have to live up to all the implications of the belief.[37]

"How are we to train individuals or communities in this difficult art ?"

There is no royal road, except through living the creed in your life which must be a living sermon. Of course, the expression in one's own life presupposes great study, tremendous perseverance, and thorough cleansing of one's self of all the impurities. If for mastering of the physical sciences you have to devote a whole life-time, how many life-times may be needed for mastering the greatest spiritual

force than mankind has known ? But why worry even if it means several life-times ? For, if this is the only permanent thing in life, if this is the only thing that counts, then whatever effort you bestow in mastering it, is well-spent. Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven and everything else shall be added unto you. The Kingdom of Heaven is *Ahimsa*.[38]

Q. Believing that mass revolution is the only means to achieve freedom, do you believe it a practical proposition that the masses will and can remain absolutely non-violent in thought and action in spite of all possible provocations in the course of such revolution ? It may be possible for an individual to attain that standard but do you think that it is possible for the masses to attain that standard of non-violence in action ?

A. This is a strange question coming from you at this time of the day, for the entire course of our non-violent fight bears testimony to the fact that wherever violence has broken out it has broken out not on the part of the masses but, if I may put it like that, on the part of the classes, that is, it was manipulated by the intellectuals. Even in violent fighting though the individual sometimes lets himself go and forgets everything, the mass of the fighting force dares not and does not. It resorts to arms only under orders and has to suspend fire in response to orders, no matter how great the individual impulse to revenge or retaliation might be. There is no *prima facie* reason why under non-violence the mass, if disciplined, should be incapable of showing the discipline which in organized warfare a fighting force normally does. Besides, a non-violent general has this special advantage : he does not require thousands of leaders to successfully carry on his fight. The non-violent message does not require so many for transmission. The example of a few true men

or women if they have fully imbibed the spirit of non-violence is bound to infect the whole mass in the end. This was just what I experienced in the beginning of the movement. I found that people actually believed that in my heart of hearts I favoured violence even when I preached non-violence. That was the way they had been trained to read and interpret the utterances of the leaders. But when they realized that I meant what I said, they did observe non-violence indeed under the most trying circumstances. There has been no repetition of Chauri Chaura. As for non-violence in thought God alone is judge. But this much is certain that non-violence in action cannot be sustained unless it goes hand in hand with non-violence in thought.[39]

It is my firm conviction that nothing endearing can be built upon violence.[40]

To answer brutality with brutality is to admit one's moral and intellectual bankruptcy and it can only start a vicious circle. . . .[41]

Though violence is not lawful, when it is offered in self-defence, or for the defence, or for the defence of the defenceless, it is an act of bravery far better than cowardly submission. The latter benefits neither man nor woman.[42]

I would risk violence a thousand times than the emasculation of a whole race.[43]

I do believe that where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence. . . .

I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she should in a cowardly manner

become or remain a helpless witness to her own dishonour.[44]

I object to violence because, when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary, the evil it does is permanent.[45]

But I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness is more manly than punishment. Forgiveness adorns a soldier. But abstinence is forgiveness only when there is the power to punish; it is meaningless when it pretends to proceed from a helpless creature....

But I do not believe India to be helpless... I do not believe myself to be a helpless creature.... Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will.[46]

The hardest heart and the grossest ignorance must disappear before the rising sun of suffering without anger and without malice.[47]

If there was no greed, there would be no occasion for armaments. The principle of non-violence necessitates complete abstention from exploitation in any form.[48]

One thing is certain. If the mad race for armaments continues, it is bound to result in a slaughter such as never occurred in history. If there is a victor left the very victory will be a living death for the nation that emerges victorious. There is no escape from the impending doom save through a bold and unconditional acceptance of the non-violent method with all its glorious implications.[49]

I have not a shadow of doubt that the world of tomorrow will be, must be a society based on non-violence.[50]

III. BELIEFS AND VALUES

I lay claim to nothing exclusively divine in me. I do not claim prophetship. I am but a humble seeker after truth and bent upon finding it. I count no sacrifice too great for the sake of seeing God face to face. The whole of my activity whether it may be called social, political, humanitarian or ethical is directed to that end. And as I know that God is found more often in the lowliest of His creatures than in the high and mighty, I am struggling to reach the status of these. I cannot do so without their service. Hence my passion for the service of the suppressed classes. And as I cannot render this service without entering politics, I find myself in them. Thus I am no master, I am but a struggling, erring, humble servant of India, and, therethrough, of humanity.[1]

My life is one indivisible whole, and all my activities run into one another, and they all have their rise in my insatiable love of mankind.[2]

My preaching and teaching are not emotional or unpractical, for I teach what is ancient and strive to practise what I preach. And I claim that what I practise is capable of being practised by all, because I am a very ordinary mortal open to the same temptations and liable to the same weaknesses as the least among us.[3]

The further conviction has been growing upon me that whatever is possible for me is possible even for a child, and I have found sound reasons for saying so. The instruments

for the quest of Truth are as simple as they are difficult. They may appear quite impossible to an arrogant person, and quite possible to an innocent child. The seeker after Truth should be humbler than the dust. The world crushes the dust under its feet but the seeker after Truth should so humble himself that even the dust could crush him. Only then, and not till then, will he have a glimpse of Truth.[4]

It is wrong to call me an ascetic. The ideals that regulate my life are presented for acceptance by mankind in general. I have arrived at them by gradual evolution. Every step was thought out, well-considered, and taken with the greatest deliberation. Both my continence and non-violence were derived from personal experience and became necessary in response to the calls of public duty. The isolated life I had to lead in South Africa whether as a house-holder, legal practitioner, social reformer or politician, required, for the due fulfilment of these duties, the strictest regulation of sexual life and a rigid practice of non-violence and truth in human relations, whether with my own country-men or with the Europeans. I claim to be no more than an average man with less than average ability. Nor can I claim any special merit for such non-violence or continence as I have been able to reach with laborious research. I have not the shadow of a doubt that any man or woman can achieve what I have, if he or she would make the same effort and cultivate the same hope and faith.[5]

For me the road to salvation lies through incessant toil in the service of my country and therethrough humanity. I want to identify myself with everything that lives. In the language of the *Gita* I want to live at peace with both friends and foe. Though, therefore, a Mussalman, or a Christian

or Hindu may despise me and hate me, I want to love him and serve him even as I would love my wife or son though they hate me. So my patriotism is for me a stage in my journey to the land of eternal freedom and peace. Thus it will be seen that for me there are no politics devoid of religion. They subserve religion. Politics bereft of religion are a death-trap because they kill the soul.[6]

To see the universal and all-pervading spirit of Truth face to face, one must be able to love the meanest of creation as oneself. And a man who aspires after that cannot afford to keep out of any field of life. That is why my devotion to Truth has drawn me into the field of politics; and I can say without the slightest hesitation, and yet in all humility, that those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means.[7]

Whenever I see an erring man, I say to myself I have also erred; when I see a lustful man, I say to myself so was I once; and in this way, I feel kinship with every one in the world and feel that I cannot be happy without the humblest of us being happy.[8]

My strength lies in my asking people to do nothing that I have not tried repeatedly in my own life.[9]

Means and end are convertible terms in my philosophy of life...[10]

They say 'means are after all means'. I would say 'Means are after all everything'. As the means so the end. There is no wall of separation between means and end. Indeed the Creator has given us control (and that too very limited) over means, none over the end. Realization of the

goal is in exact proportion to that of the means. This is a proposition that admits of no exception.[11]

The means may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree; and there is just the same inviolable connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree.[12]

I stand for unadulterated non-violent action and open means. I abhor secrecy.[13]

All sins are committed in secrecy. The moment we realize that God witnesses even our thoughts, we shall be free.[14]

Impure means result in an impure end. One cannot reach Truth by untruthfulness. Truthful conduct alone can reach Truth.[15]

Success or failure is not in our hands. It is enough we do our part well. Ours is but to strive. In the end, it will be as He wishes.[16]

For over 50 years, I have trained myself never to be concerned about the result. What I should be concerned about is the means; and when I am sure of the purity of the means, faith is enough to lead me on. All fear and trembling melt away before that faith.[17]

All my life through, the very insistence on truth has taught me to appreciate the beauty of compromise. I saw in later life that this spirit was an essential part of *satyagraha*. It has often meant endangering my life and incurring the

displeasure of friends. But truth is hard as adamant and tender as a blossom.[18]

I am used to misrepresentation all my life. It is the lot of every public worker. He has to have a tough hide. Life would be burdensome if every misrepresentation has to be answered and cleared. It is a rule of life with me never to explain misrepresentations except when the cause required correction. This rule has saved much time and worry.[19]

I am but a seeker after Truth. I claim to have found a way to it. I claim to be making a ceaseless effort to find it. But I admit that I have not yet found it. To find Truth completely is to realize oneself and one's destiny, *i.e.*, to become perfect. I am painfully conscious of my imperfections, and therein lies all the strength I possess because it is a rare thing for a man to know his own limitations.[20]

I am devoted to none but Truth and I owe no discipline to anybody but Truth.[21]

I am an irrepressible optimist, because I believe in myself. That sounds very arrogant, doesn't it? But I say it from the depths of my humility. I believe in the supreme power of God. I believe in Truth and therefore, I have no doubt in the future of this country or the future of humanity.[22]

I do not hold that everything ancient is good because it is ancient. I do not advocate surrender of God-given reasoning faculty in the face of ancient tradition. Any tradition, however ancient, if inconsistent with morality, is fit to be banished from the land. Untouchability may be

considered to be an ancient tradition, the institution of child widowhood and child marriage may be considered to be an ancient tradition, and even so many an ancient horrible belief and superstitious practice. I would sweep them out of existence if I had the power.[23]

I believe that we can all become messengers of God if we cease to fear man and seek only God's Truth. I do believe I am seeking only God's Truth and have lost all fear of man.[24]

I have never made a fetish of consistency. I am a votary of Truth and I must say what I feel and think at a given moment on the question, without regard to what I may have said before on it....As my vision gets clearer, my views must grow clearer with daily practice. Where I have deliberately altered an opinion, the change should be obvious, only, a careful eye would notice a gradual and imperceptible evolution.[25]

My aim is not to be consistent with my previous statements on a given question, but to be consistent with truth as it may present itself to me at a given moment. The result has been that I have grown from truth to truth.[26]

I am easy to deal with. I may firmly adhere to a particular view, but if I find it mistaken, I give it up at once.[27]

I do not want to foresee the future. I am concerned with taking care of the present. God has given me no control over the moment following.[28]

The impenetrable darkness that surrounds us is not a

curse but a blessing. He has given us power to see only the step in front of us, and it should be enough if Heavenly light reveals that step to us. We can then sing with Newman, "One step enough for me." And we may be sure from our past experience that the next step will always be in view. In other words, the impenetrable darkness is nothing so impenetrable as we imagine. But it seems impenetrable when, in our impatience, we want to look beyond that one step.[29]

I am a man of faith. My reliance is solely on God. One step is enough for me. The next step He will make clear to me when the time for it comes.[30]

I am but a poor struggling soul yearning to be wholly good—wholly truthful and wholly non-violent in thought, word and deed, but ever failing to reach the ideal which I know to be true. I admit it is a painful climb, but the pain of it is a positive pleasure for me. Each step forward makes me feel stronger and fit for the next.[31]

I have no strength except what comes from insistence on Truth. Non-violence, too, springs from the same insistence.[32]

I see and find beauty in Truth or through Truth. All Truths, not merely true ideas, but truthful faces, truthful pictures or songs are highly beautiful. People generally fail to see Beauty in Truth, the ordinary man runs away from it and becomes blind to the beauty in it. Whenever men begin to see Beauty in Truth, then true Art will arise.[33]

Life is greater than all art. I would go even further and declare that the man whose life comes nearest to perfection

is the greatest artist; for what is art without the sure foundation and frame-work of a noble life ?[34]

As I am nearing the end of my earthly life I can say that purity of life is the highest and truest art. The art of producing good music from a cultivated voice can be achieved by many, but the art of producing that music from the harmony of a pure life is achieved very rarely.[35]

I am more concerned in preventing the brutalization of human nature than in the prevention of the sufferings of my own people. I know that people who voluntarily undergo a course of suffering raise themselves and the whole of humanity; but I also know that people who become brutalized in their desparate efforts to get victory over their opponents or to exploit weaker nations or weaker men, not only drag down themselves but mankind also. And it cannot be a matter of pleasure to me or any one else to see human nature dragged to the mire. If we are all sons of the same God and partake of the same divine essence, we must partake of the sin of every person whether he belongs to us or to another race. You can understand how repugnant it must be to invoke the beast in any human being.[36]

My goal is friendship with the world and I can combine the greatest love with the greatest opposition to wrong.[37]

Nothing crooked will have countenance from me. For me the law of *satyagraha,* the law of love, is an eternal principle. I cooperate with all that is good. I desire to non-cooperate with all that is evil.[38]

Having made a ceaseless effort to attain self-purification, I have developed some little capacity to hear correctly and clearly the "still small voice" within.[39]

I have no special revelation of God's will. My firm belief is that He reveals himself daily to every human being, but we shut our ears to the "still small voice". We shut our eyes to the Pillar of Fire in front of us. I realize His omnipresence.[40]

The only tyrant I accept in this world is the "still small voice" within.[41]

And everyone who wills can hear the Voice. It is within everyone. But like everything else, it requires previous and definite preparation.[42]

I shall lose my usefulness the moment I stifle the "still small voice" within.[43]

This ability to hear and obey the Inner Voice gives me whatever power I may have and has enabled me to render some little service to the country. You will not have me at this time of my life to change my course and listen to any other voice but the Inner.[44]

There are moments in your life when you must act, even though you cannot carry your best friends with you. The 'still small voice' within you must always be the final arbiter when there is a conflict of duty.[45]

There come to us moments in life when about some things we need no proof from without. A little voice within us tells us, 'you are on the right track, move neither to your left nor right, but keep to the straight and narrow way'.[46]

Both birth and death are great mysteries. If death is not prelude to another life, the intermediate period is a cruel mockery. We must learn the art of never grieving over death, no matter when and to whom it comes. I suppose that we shall do so when we have really learnt to be utterly indifferent to our own, and the indifference will come when we are every moment conscious of having done the task to which we are called.[47]

There is a state in life when a man does not need....to proclaim his thoughts, much less to show them by outward action. Mere thoughts act. They attain that power. Then it can be said of him that his seeming inaction constitutes his action....My striving is in that direction.[48]

Have I that non-violence of the brave in me ? My death alone will show that. If someone killed me and I died with prayer for the assassin on my lips, and God's remembrance and consciousness of His living presence in the sanctuary of my heart, then alone would I be said to have had the non-violence of the brave.[49]

I do not want to die....of a creeping paralysis of my faculties—a defeated man. An assassin's bullet may put an end to my life. I would welcome it. But I would love, above all, to fade out doing my duty with my last breath.[50]

If I die of a lingering illness, nay even by as much as a boil or a pimple, it will be your duty to proclaim to the world, even at the risk of making people angry with you, that I was not the man of God, that I claimed to be. If you do that it will give my spirit peace. Note down this also that if someone were to end my life by putting a bullet

through me—as someone tried to do with a bomb the other day—and I met his bullet without a groan, and breathed my last taking God's name, then alone would I have made good my claim.*[51]

After I am gone, no single person will be able completely to represent me. But a little bit of me will live in many of you. If each puts the cause first and himself last, the vacuum will to a large extent be filled.[52]

The highest honour that my friends can do me is to enforce in their own lives the programme I stand for or resist me to their utmost if they do not believe in it. Blind adoration in the age of action is perfectly valueless, is often embarrassing and equally, often painful.[53]

I do not want to be reborn. But if I have to be reborn, I should be born an untouchable, so that I may share their sorrows, sufferings, and the affronts levelled at them, in order that I may endeavour to free myself and them from that miserable condition. I, therefore, pray that if I should be born again I should do so not as a Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, or Shudra, but as an Atishudra.[54]

*This was uttered on the night of 29th January 1948, less than twenty hours before he was shot.

IV. THE SOUL OF ALL RELIGIONS IS ONE

Without faith this world would come to naught in a moment. True faith is appropriation of the reasoned experience of people whom we believe to have lived a life purified by prayer and penance. Belief, therefore, in prophets or incarnations who have lived in remote ages is not an idle superstition but a satisfaction of an inmost spiritual want.[1]

There are subjects where Reason cannot take us far and we have to accept things on faith. Faith then does not contradict Reason but transcends it. Faith is a kind of sixth sense which works in cases which are without the purview of Reason.[2]

I plead not for the suppression of reason, but for a due recognition of that in us which sanctifies reason itself.[3]

Faith is not a delicate flower which would wither under the slightest stormy weather. Faith is like the Himalaya mountains which cannot possibly change. No storm can possibly remove the Himalaya mountains from their foundations. . . . And I want every one of you to cultivate that faith in God and religion.[4]

By religion, I do not mean formal religion, or customary religion, but that religion which underlines all religions, which brings us face to face with our Maker.[5]

Indeed, religion should pervade every one of our actions.

Here religion does not mean sectarianism. It means a belief in ordered moral government of the Universe. It is not less real because it is unseen. This religion transcends Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, etc. It does not supersede them. It harmonizes them and gives them reality.[6]

Religions are different roads converging upon the same point. What does it matter that we take different roads so long as we reach the same goal ?[7]

I do not like the word tolerance, but could not think of a better one. Tolerance may imply a gratuitous assumption of the inferiority of other faith to one's own, whereas *ahimsa* teaches us to entertain the same respect for the religious faiths of others as we accord to our own, thus admitting the imperfection of the latter. This admission will be readily made by a seeker of Truth who follows the law of love. If we had attained the full vision of Truth, we would no longer be mere seekers, but would have become one with God, for Truth is God. But being only seekers, we prosecute our quest, and are conscious of our imperfection. And if we are imperfect ourselves, religion as conceived by us must also be imperfect. We have not realized religion in its perfection even as we have not realized God. Religion of our conception, being thus imperfect, is always subject to a process of evolution. And if all faiths outlined by men are imperfect, the question of comparative merit does not arise. All faiths constitute a revelation of Truth, but all are imperfect, and liable to error. Reverence for other faiths need not blind us to their faults. We must be keenly alive to the defects of our own faith also, yet not leave it on that account, but try to overcome those defects. Looking at all religions with an equal eye, we would not only not hesitate, but would

think it our duty, to blend into our faith every acceptable feature of other faiths.

The question then arises : Why should there be so many different faiths ? The soul is one but the bodies which She animates are many. We cannot reduce the number of bodies; yet we recognize the unity of the Soul. Even as a tree has a single trunk, but many branches and leaves, so there is one true and perfect religion, but it becomes many, as it passes through the human medium. The one Religion is beyond all speech. Imperfect men put it into such language as they can command, and their words are interpreted by other men equally imperfect. Which interpretation is to be held to the right one ? Everybody is right from his own standpoint, but it is not impossible that everybody is wrong. Hence the necessity of tolerance, which does not mean indifference to one's own faith, but a more intelligent and purer love or it. Tolerance gives us spiritual insight, which is as far from fanaticism as the North Pole from the South. True knowledge of religion breaks down the barriers between faith and faith.[8]

Cultivation of tolerance for other faiths will impart to us a truer understanding of our own.

Tolerance obviously does not disturb the distinction between right and wrong, or good and evil. The reference here throughout is naturally to the principal faiths of the world. They are all based on common fundamentals. They have all produced great saints.[9]

I believe in the fundamental truth of all great religions of the world. I believe that they are all God-given, and I believe that they were necessary for the people to whom these religions were revealed. And I believe that, if only

we could all of us read the scriptures of the different faiths from the standpoint of the followers of those faiths, we should find that they were at the bottom all one and were all helpful to one another.[10]

Belief in one God is the corner-stone of all religions. But I do not foresee a time when there would be only one religion on earth in practice. In theory, since there is one God, there can be only one religion. But in practice, no two persons I have known have had the same identical conception of God. Therefore, there will, perhaps, always be different religions answering to different temperaments and climatic conditions.[11]

Religions are not for separating men from one another, they are meant to bind them.[12]

I should love all the men—not only in India but in the world—belonging to different faiths, to become better people by contact with one another, and if that happens the world will be a much better place to live in than it is today. I plead for the broadest toleration and I am working to that end. I ask people to examine every religion from the point of the religionists themselves. I do not expect India of my dream to develop one religion, that is, to be wholly Hindu or wholly Christian or wholly Mussalman, but I want it to be wholly tolerant, with its religions working side by side with one another.[13]

The need of the moment is not one religion, but mutual respect and tolerance of the devotees of the different religions. We want to reach not the dead level, but unity in diversity. Any attempt to root out traditions, effects of

heredity, climate and other surroundings is not only bound to fail, but it is a sacrilege. The soul of religions is one, but it is encased in a multitude of forms. The latter will persist to the end of time. Wise men will ignore the outward crust and see the same soul living under a variety of crusts. For Hindus to expect Islam, Christianity or Zoroastrianism to be driven out of India is as idle a dream as it would be for Mussalmans to have only Islam of their imagination rule the world. But if belief in One God and the race of His Prophets in a never-ending chain is sufficient for Islam, then we are all Mussalmans, but we are also all Hindus and Christians. Truth is the exclusive property of no single scripture.[14]

We may call ourselves Christians, Hindus or Mohammedans. Whatever we may be, beneath that diversity there is a oneness which is unmistakable and underneath many religions there is also one religion. As far as my experience goes, at one time or other, we, the Mohammedans, Christians or Hindus, discover that there are many points of contact and very few points of difference.[15]

Every religion is as precious to me as my own Hinduism... No thought of conversion is permissible to me at all. We must help a Hindu to become a better Hindu, a Mussalman to become a better Mussalman and a Christian to become a better Christian.... We must eradicate from our midst the secret pride that our religion is more true and that another's is less so. Our attitude towards all other religions must be absolutely clear and sincere. Our prayer for others should never be, "Oh God, give him the light which Thou hast given me," but "Give him all the light and truth that he needs for his highest attainment."... Should

some persons think of changing their religious label (converting themselves), I cannot hinder their freedom of action, but I will be sorry to see them act thus.[16]

Hinduism is not an exclusive religion. In it there is room for the worship of all the prophets in the world. It is not a missionary religion in the ordinary sense of the term. It has no doubt absorbed many tribes in its fold, but this absorption has been of an evolutionary, imperceptible character. Hinduism tells everyone to worship God according to his own faith or Dharma, and so it lives at peace with all the religions.[17]

Though I cannot claim to be a Christian in the sectarian sense, the example of Jesus' suffering is a factor in the composition of my undying faith in non-violence which rules all my actions, worldly and temporal.[18]

I certainly regard Islam as one of the inspired religions, and, therefore, the Holy Koran as an inspired book and Muhammad as one of the prophets.[19]

I do not believe in the exclusive divinity of the Vedas. I believe the *Bible,* the *Koran* and the *Zend Avesta* to be as much divinely inspired as the Vedas. My belief in the Hindu scriptures does not require me to accept every word and every verse as divinely inspired... I decline to be bound by an interpretation, however learned it may be, if it is repugnant to reason or moral sense.[20]

I am not a literalist. Therefore, I try to understand the spirit of the various scriptures of the world. I apply the test of truth and *ahimsa* laid down by these very scriptures for

interpretation. I reject what is inconsistent with that test, and appropriate all that is consistent with it.[21]

There is no religion higher than Truth and Righteousness.[22]

If a man reaches the heart of his own religion, he has reached the heart of others, too.[23]

I reject any religious doctrine that does not appeal to reason and is in conflict with morality. I tolerate unreasonable religious sentiment when it is not immoral.[24]

As soon as we lose the moral basis, we cease to be religious. There is no such thing as religion overriding morality. Man for instance cannot be untruthful, cruel and incontinent and claim to have God on his side.[25]

We should cease to grow the moment we cease to discriminate between virtue and vice and slavishly copy the past which we do not fully know. We are proud heirs to all that was noblest and best in the bygone age. We must not dishonour our heritage by multiplying past errors.[26]

Where there is fear there is no religion.[27]

Fearlessness does not mean arrogance or aggressiveness. That in itself is a sign of fear. Fearlessness presupposes calmness and peace of mind. For that it is necessary to have a living faith in God.[28]

I am both an idolator and an iconoclast in what I conceive to be the true senses of the terms. I value the

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spirit behind idol-worship. It plays a most important part in the uplift of the human race. And I would like to possess the ability to defend with my life the thousands of holy temples which sanctify this land of ours.

I am an iconoclast in the sense that I break down the subtle form of idolatory in the shape of fanaticism that refuses to see any virtue in any other form of worshipping the Deity save one's own. This form of idolatory is more deadly for being more fine and evasive than the tangible and gross form of worship that identifies the Deity with a little bit of a stone of a golden image.[29]

I do not regard the existence of temples as a sin or superstition. Some form of common worship, and a common place of worship appear to be human necessity.[30]

I am writing this note in reply to an ardent Hindu friend who has thus gently reproached me. "You have now given the *Kalma* a place in the *Ashram*. What further remains to be done to kill your Hinduism ?"

I am confident that my Hinduism and that of the other *Ashram* Hindus has grown thereby. There should be in us an equal reverence for all religions. Badshah Khan, whenever he comes, joins in the worship here with delight. He loves the tune to which the *Ramayana* is sung, and he listens intently to the *Gita*. His faith in Islam has not lessened thereby. Then, why may I not listen to the *Quran* with equal reverence and adoration in my heart ?

Rama is not known by only a thousand names. His names are innumerable, and He is the same whether we call Him *Allah, Khuda, Rahim, Razzak,* the Bread-giver, or any name that comes from the heart of a true devotee.[31]

I believe that prayer is the very soul and essence of religion, and, therefore, prayer must be the very core of the life of man, for no man can live without religion. There are some who, in the egotism of their reason, declare that they have nothing to do with religion. But it is like a man saying that he breathes, but that he has no nose....

The man of prayer will be at peace with himself and with the whole world; the man who goes about the affairs of the world without a prayerful heart will be miserable and will make the world also miserable. Apart, therefore, from its bearing on man's condition after death, prayer has incalculable value for man in this world of the living. Prayer is the only means of bringing about orderliness and peace and repose in our daily acts....[32]

I agree that, if a man could practise the presence of God all the twenty-four hours, there would be no need for a separate time for prayer. But most people find this impossible. The sordid everyday world is too much with them. For them the practice of complete withdrawal of the mind from all outward things, even though it might be only for a few minutes every day, will be found to be of infinite use. Silent communion will help them to experience an undisturbed peace in the midst of turmoil, to curb anger and cultivate patience.[33]

What I am relating is not a fairy tale. I have not drawn an imaginary picture. I have summed up the testimony of men who have by prayer conquered every difficulty in their upward progress, and I have added my own humble testimony that the more I live the more I realize how much I owe to faith and prayer which is one and the same thing for me. And I am quoting an experience not limited to a few hours

or days or weeks, but extending over an unbroken period of nearly 40 years. I have had my share of disappointments, uttermost darkness, counsels of despair, counsels of caution. subtlest assaults of pride; but I am able to say that my faith—and I know that it is still little enough, by no means as great as I want it to be,—has ultimately conquered every one of these difficulties up to now. . . .

Not until we have reduced ourselves to nothingness can we conquer the evil in us. God demands nothing less than complete self-surrender as the price for the only real freedom that is worth having. And when a man thus loses himself, he immediately finds himself in the service of all that lives. It becomes his delight and his recreation. He is a new man, never weary of spending himself in the service of God's creation.[34]

Begin, therefore, your day with prayer, and make it so soulful that it may remain with you until the evening. Close the day with prayer so that you may have a peaceful night free from dreams and nightmares. Do not worry about the form of prayer. Let it be any form, it should be such as can put us into communion with the Divine. Only, whatever be the form, let not the spirit wander while the words of prayer run on out of your mouth.

Restraint self-imposed is no compulsion. A man, who chooses the path of freedom from restraint, *i.e.* of self-indulgence, will be a bond-slave of passions, whilst the man who binds himself to rules and restraints releases himself. All things in the universe including the sun and the moon and the stars, obey certain laws. Without the restraining influence of these laws, the world would not go on for a single moment. You will go to pieces if you do not impose on yourselves some sort of discipline, and prayer is a

necessary spiritual discipline. It is discipline and restraint that separates us from the brute. If we will be men, walking with our heads erect and not walking on all fours, let us understand and put ourselves under voluntary discipline and restraint.[35]

Q. The difficulty with our youth is that the study of science and modern philosophy has demolished their faith and so they are burnt up by the fire of disbelief.

A. That is due to the fact that with them faith is an effort of the intellect, not an experience of the soul. Intellect takes us along in the battle of life to a certain limit, but at the crucial moment it fails us. Faith transcends reason. It is when the horizon is the darkest and human reason is beaten down to the ground, that faith shines brightest and comes to our rescue. It is such faith that our youth requires, and this comes when one has shed all pride of intellect and surrendered oneself entirely to His will.[36]

There is something infinitely higher than intellect that rules us and even the sceptics. Their scepticism and philosophy do not help them in critical periods of their lives. They need something better, something outside them that can sustain them. And so, if someone puts a conundrum before me, I say to him : You are not going to know the meaning of God or prayer, unless you reduce yourself to a cipher. You must be humble enough to see that in spite of your greatness and gigantic intellect, you are but a speck in the universe. A merely intellectual conception of the things of life is not enough. It is the spiritual conception which eludes the intellect, and which alone can give one satisfaction. Even monied men have critical periods in their lives; though they are surrounded by everything that money can buy and

affection can give, they find at certain moments in their lives utterly distracted. It is in these moments that we have a glimpse of God, a vision of Him who is guiding everyone of our steps in life. It is prayer.[37]

In spite of despair staring me in the face on the political horizon, I have never lost my peace. In fact, I have found people who envy my peace. That peace, I tell you, comes from prayer. I am not a man of learning, but I humbly claim to be a man of prayer . . .

I have given my practical testimony. Let everyone try and find, that as a result of daily prayer he adds something new to his life, something with which nothing can be compared.[38]

V. DARIDRANARAYAN

Daridranarayan is one of the millions of names by which humanity knows God who is unnameable and unfathomable by human understanding, and it means God of the poor, God appearing in the hearts of the poor.[1]

I claim to know my millions. All the 24 hours of the day I am with them. They are my first care and last because I recognize no God except that God that is to be found in the hearts of the dumb millions. They do not recognize His presence; I do. And I worship the God that is Truth or Truth which is God through the service of these millions.[2]

To a people famishing and idle, the only acceptable form in which God can dare appear is work and promise of food as wages.[3]

We should be ashamed of resting or having a square meal so long as there is one able-bodied man or woman without work or food.[4]

Imagine, therefore, what a calamity it must be to have 300 millions unemployed, several millions becoming degraded every day for want of employment, devoid of self-respect, devoid of faith in God. I may as well place before the dog over there the message of God as before those hungry millions who have no lustre in their eyes and whose only God is their bread. I can take before them a message of God only by taking the message of sacred work before them. It is good enough to talk of God whilst we are sitting here after a nice

break-fast and looking forward to a nicer luncheon, but how am I to talk of God to the millions who have to go without two meals a day ? To them God can only appear as bread and butter.[5]

For the poor the economic is the spiritual. Talk to them of modern progress. Insult them by taking the name of God before them in vain. They will call you and me fiends if we talk about God to them. They know, if they know any God at all, a God of terror, vengeance, a pitiless tyrant.[6]

Years ago I read a poem in which the peasant is described as the father of the world. If God is the provider the cultivator is His hand. What are we going to do to discharge the debt we owe to him ? So long we have only lived on the sweat of his brow.[7]

The goldern rule. . . . is resolutely to refuse to have what the millions cannot. This ability to refuse will not descend upon us all of a sudden. The first thing is to cultivate the mental attitude that will not have possessions or facilities denied to millions, and the next immediate thing is to rearrange our lives as fast as possible in accordance with that mentality.[8]

A violent and bloody revolution is a certainty one day unless there is a voluntary abdication of riches and the power that riches give and sharing them for the common good.[9]

Today there is gross economic inequality. The basis of socialism is economic equality. There can be no *Ramarajya* in the present state of iniquitous inequalities in which a few roll in riches and the masses do not get even enough to eat.[10]

Indian economic independence means to me the economic uplift of every individual, male and female, by his or her own conscious effort. Under that system, all men and women will have enough clothing—not the mere loin cloth, but what we understand by the term necessary articles of clothing—and enough food including milk and butter, which are today denied to millions.[11]

According to me the economic constitution of India, and for that matter of the world, should be such that no one under it should suffer from want of food and clothing. In other words everybody should be able to get sufficient work to enable him to make the two ends meet. And this ideal can be universally realized only if the means of production of the elementary necessaries of life remain in the control of the masses. These should be freely available to all as God's air and water are or ought to be; they should not be made a vehicle of traffic for the exploitation of others. Their monopolization by any country, nation or group of persons would be unjust. The neglect of this simple principle is the cause of the destitution that we witness today not only in this unhappy land but in other parts of the world too.[12]

I must confess that I do not draw a sharp or any distinction between economics and ethics. Economics that hurt the moral well-being of an individual or a nation are immoral and, therefore, sinful. Thus the economics that permit one country to prey upon another are immoral.[13]

"All men are born equal and free" is not Nature's law in the literal sense. All men are not born equal in intellect, for instance; but the doctrine of equality will be vindicated if those who have superior intellect will use it not for self-

advancement at the expense of others, but for the service of those who are less favoured in that respect than they.[14]

The art of amassing riches becomes a degrading and despicable art, if it is not accompanied by the nobler art of how to spend wealth usefully.....Let not possession of wealth be synonymous with degradation, vice and profligacy.[15]

"Earn your crores by all means. But understand that your wealth is not yours; it belongs to the people. Take what you require for your legitimate needs, and use the remainder for society." This truth has hitherto not been acted upon; but if the monied classes do not even act on it in these times of stress, they will remain the slaves of their riches and passions and consequently of those who overpower them.[16]

I have always said that my ideal is that capital and labour should supplement and help each other. They should be a great family living in unity and harmony, capital not only looking to the material welfare of the labourers, but their moral welfare also—capitalists being trustees for the welfare of the labouring classes under them.[17]

Exploitation of the poor can be extinguished not by effecting the destruction of a few millionaires, but by removing the ignorance of the poor and teaching them to non-cooperative with their exploiters. That will convert the exploiters also. I have even suggested that ultimately it will lead to both being equal partners. Capital as such is not evil; it is the wrong use that is evil. Capital in some form or other will always be needed.[18]

I want to bring about an equalization of status. The

working classes have all these centuries been isolated and relegated to a lower status. They have been *shoodras,* and the word has been interpreted to mean an inferior status. I want to allow no differentiation between the son of a weaver, of an agriculturist and of a schoolmaster.[19]

The labourer has to realize that labour is also capital. As soon as labourers are properly educated and organized, and they realize their strength, no amount of capital can subdue them. Organized and enlightened labour can dictate its own terms. It is no use vowing vengeance against a party because we are weak. We have to get strong. Strong hearts, enlightened minds and willing hands can brave all odds and remove all obstacles.[20]

I do not think there need be any clash between capital and labour. Each is dependent on the other. What is essential today is that the capitalist should not lord it over the labourer. In my opinion, the mill-hands are as much the proprietors of their mills as the share-holders, and when the mill-owners realize that the mill-hands are as much mill-owners as they, there will be no quarrel between them.[21]

By the non-violent method, we seek not to destroy the capitalist, we seek to destroy capitalism. We invite the capitalist to regard himself as a trustee for those on whom he depends for the making, the retention and the increase of his capital. Nor need the worker wait for his conversion. If capital is power, so is work. Either power can be used destructively or creatively. Either is dependent on the other. Immediately the worker realizes his strength, he is in a position to become a co-sharer with the capitalist instead of re-

maining his slave. If he aims at becoming the sole owner, he will most likely be killing the hen that lays golden eggs.[22]

Machinery has its place; it has come to stay. But it must not be allowed to displace necessary human labour.[23]

As a moderately intelligent man, I know that man cannot live without industry. Therefore, I cannot be opposed to industrialization. But I have a great concern about introducing machine industry. The machine produces much too fast, and brings with it a sort of economic system which I cannot grasp. I do not want to accept something when I see its evil effects which outweigh whatever good it brings with it. I want the dumb millions of our land to be healthy and happy, and I want them to grow spiritually. As yet for this purpose we do not need the machine. There are many, too many idle hands. But as we grow in understanding, if we feel the need of machines, we certainly will have them. We want industry, but let us become industrious. Let us become more self-dependent, then we will not follow the other peoples' lead so much. We shall introduce machinery if and when we need them. Once we have shaped our life on *ahimsa* we shall know how to control the machine.[24]

Granting for the moment that machinery may supply all the needs of humanity, still, it would concentrate production in particular areas, so that you would have to go about in a round about way to regulate distribution, whereas, if there is production and distribution both in the respective areas where things are required, it is automatically regulated, and there is less chance for fraud, none for speculation. . . . . When production and consumption both become localized, the temptation to speed up production, indefinitely and at any price,

disappears. All the endless difficulties and problems that our present-day economic system presents, too, would then come to an end.... Oh yes, mass production certainly.... but mass production (on individual basis) in people's own homes. If you multiply individual production millions of times, would it not give you mass-production on a tremendous scale? .... Your mass-production is .... production by the fewest possible number through the aid of highly complicated machinery ..... My machinery must be of the most elementary type which I can put in the homes of the millions.

"So you are opposed to machinery only because and when it concentrates production and distribution in the hands of the few?"

You are right, I hate privilege and monopoly. Whatever cannot be shared with the masses is taboo to me. That is all.[25]

"You would not industrialize India?"

I would, indeed, in my sense of the term. But I am industrializing the village in a different way.[26]

I would prize every invention of science for the benefit of all.[27]

Every machine that helps every individual has a place.... Labour has its unique place in a cultured human family[28]

Simple tools and instruments and such machinery as saves individual labour and lightens the burden of the millions of cottages, I should welcome.[29]

What I object to, is the 'craze' for machinery, not machinery as such. The craze is for what they call labour-saving machinery. Men go on "saving labour" till thousands are

without work and thrown on the open streets to die of starvation. I want to save time and labour, not for a fraction of mankind, but for all; I want the concentration of wealth, not in the hands of a few, but in the hands of all. Today machinery merely helps a few to ride on the back of millions. The impetus behind it all is not the philanthropy to save labour, but greed. It is against this constitution of things that I am fighting with all my might.

'Then you are fighting not against machinery as such, but against its abuses which are so much in evidence today.'

I would unhesitatingly say "yes", but I would add that scientific truths and discoveries should first of all cease to be mere instruments of greed. Then labourers will not be overworked and machinery, instead of becoming an hindrance will be a help. I am aiming, not at eradication of all machinery, but limitation.

'When logically argued out, that would seem to imply that all complicated power-driven machinery should go.'

It might have to go but I must make one thing clear.

The supreme consideration is man. The machine should not tend to make atrophied the limbs of man. For instance, I would make intelligent exceptions. Take the case of the Singer Sewing Machine. It is one of the few useful things ever invented, and there is a romance about the device itself. Singer saw his wife labouring over the tedious process of sewing and seaming with her own hands, and simply out of his love for her he devised the sewing machine in order to save her from unnecessary labour. He, however, saved not only her labour but also the labour of everyone who could purchase a sewing machine.

But in that case there would have to be factory for making these Singer Sewing Machines, and it would have to contain power-driven machinery of ordinary type.

Yes, but I am socialist enough to say that such factories should be nationalized, or State-controlled. They ought only to be working under the most attractive and ideal conditions not for profit, but for the benefit of humanity, love taking the place of greed as the motive.

It is an alteration in the condition of labour that I want. This mad rush for wealth must cease, and the labourer must be assured, not only of a living wage, but a daily task that is not a mere drudgery. The machine will, under these conditions, be as much a help to the man working it as to the State, or the man who owns it. The present mad rush will cease and the labourer will work (as I have said) under attractive and ideal conditions. This is but one of the exceptions I have in mind. The sewing machine had love at its back. The individual is the one supreme consideration. The saving of labour of the individual should be the object, and the honest humanitarian consideration, and no greed, the motive. Replace greed by love and everything will come right.[30]

Capital exploits the labour of a few to multiply itself, but the sum total of the labour of the crores wisely utilized automatically increases the wealth of the crores.[31]

Mechanization is good when the hands are too few for the work intended to be accomplished. It is an evil when there are more hands than required for the work as is the case in India..... The problem with us is not how to find leisure for the teeming millions inhabiting our villages. The problem is how to utilise their idle hours, which are equal to the working days of six months in the year.[32]

But whether good or bad, why must India become indus-

trial in the Western sense? The Western civilization is urban. Small countries like England or Italy may afford to urbanize their systems. A big country like America with a very sparse population, perhaps, cannot do otherwise. But one would think that a big country, with a teeming population, with an ancient rural tradition which has hitherto answered its purpose, need not, must not copy the Western model. What is good for one nation situated in one condition, is not necessarily good enough for another differently situated. One man's food is often another man's poison. Physical geography of a country has a predominant share in determining its culture. A fur coat may be a necessity for the dweller in the polar regions, it will smother those living in the equatorial regions.[33]

God forbid that India should ever take to industrialisation after the manner of the West. The economic imperialism of a single tiny island kingdom (England) is today keeping the world in chains. If an entire nation of 300 millions took to similar economic exploitation, it would strip the world bare like locusts.[34]

India has seven lakhs of villages which take in 90 per cent of her population.....My views on national planning differ from the prevailing ones. I do not want it along industrial lines. I want to prevent our villages from catching the infection of industrialization.

Pandit Nehru wants industrialization because he thinks that, if it is socialized, it would be free from the evils of capitalism. My own view is that the evils are inherent in industrialism, and no amount of socialization can eradicate them.[35]

I do not believe that industrialization is necessary in any case for any country. It is much less so for India. Indeed, I believe that Independent India can only discharge her duty towards a graoning world by adopting a simple but ennobled life, by developing her thousands of cottages and living at peace with the world. High thinking is inconsistent with complicated material life based on high speed imposed on us by Mammon worship. All the graces of life are possible only when we learn the art of living nobly.

At the same time, I believe that some key industries are necessary. I do not believe in armchair or armed socialism. I believe in action according to my belief, without waiting for wholesale conversion. Hence, without having to enumerate key industries, I would have State ownership, where a large number of people have to work together. The ownership of the products of their labour, whether skilled or unskilled, will vest in them through the State. But as I can conceive such a State only based on non-violence, I would not dispossess monied men by force, but would invite their co-operation in the process of conversion to State ownership. There are no pariahs of society, whether they are millionaires or paupers. The two are sores of the same disease. And all are men "for a' that".[36]

Socialism is a beautiful word and, so far as I am aware, in socialism all the members of society are equal—none low, none high. In the individual body, the head is not high because it is the top of the body, nor are the soles of the feet low because they touch the earth. Even as members of the individual body are equal, so are the members of society. This is socialism.

In it the prince and the peasant, the wealthy and the poor, the employer and the employee are all on the same level. In

terms of religion, there is no duality in socialism. It is all unity. Looking at society all the world over, there is nothing but duality or plurality. Unity is conspicuous by its absence.... In the unity of my conception there is perfect unity in the plurality of designs.

In order to reach this state, we may not look on things philosophically and say that we need not make a move until all are converted to socialism. Without changing our life we may go on giving addresses, forming parties and hawk-like seize the game when it comes our way. This is no socialism. The more we treat it as game to be seized, the farther it must recede from us.

Socialism begins with the first convert. If there is one such you can add zeros to the one and the first zero will account for ten and every addition will account for ten times the previous number. If, however, the beginner is a zero, in other words, no one makes the beginning, multiplicity of zeros will also produce zero value. Time and paper occupied in writing zeros will be so much waste.

This socialism is as pure as crystal. It, therefore, requires crystal-like means to achieve it. Impure means result in an impure end. Hence the prince and the peasant will not be equalled by cutting off the prince's head, nor can the process of cutting off equalize the employer and the employed. One cannot reach truth by untruthfulness. Truthful conduct alone can reach truth. Are not non-violent and truth twins ? The answer is an emphatic "No." Non-violence is embedded in truth and vice-versa. Hence has it been said that they are faces of the same coin. Either is inseparable from the other. Read the coin either way—the spelling of words will be different, the value is the same. This blessed state is unattainable without perfect purity. Harbour impurity of mind or body and you have untruth and violence in you.

Therefore only truthful, non-violent and pure-hearted socialists will be able to establish a socialistic society in India and the world.[37]

The real implication of equal distribution is that each man shall have the wherewithal to supply all his natural wants and no more. For example, if one man has a weak digestion and requires only a quarter of a pound of flour for his bread and another needs a pound, both should be in a position to satisfy their wants. To bring this ideal into being the entire social order has got to be reconstructed. A society based on non-violence cannot nurture any other ideal. We may not perhaps be able to realize the goal but we must bear it in mind and work unceasingly to near it. To the same extent as we progress towards our goal we shall find contentment and happiness, and to that extent too, shall we have contributed towards the bringing into being of a non-violent society.

Now let us consider how equal distribution can be brought about through non-violence. The first step towards it is for him who has made this ideal part of his being to bring about the necessary changes in his personal life. He would reduce his wants to a minimum, bearing in mind the poverty of India. His earnings would be free of dishonesty. The desire for speculation would be renounced. His habitation would be in keeping with his new mode of life. There would be self-restraint exercised in every sphere of life. When he has done all that is possible in his own life, then only will he be in a position to preach this ideal among his associates and neighbours.

Indeed at the root of this doctrine of equal distribution must lie that of the trusteeship of the wealthy for superfluous wealth possessed by them. For according to the doctrine they may not possess a rupee more than their neighbours. How

is this to be brought out ? Non-violently ? Or should the wealthy be dispossessed of their possession ? To do this we would naturally have to resort to violence. This violent action cannot benefit the society. Society will be the poorer, for it will lose the gifts of a man who knows how to accumulate wealth. Therefore the non-violent way is evidently superior. The rich man will be left in possession of his wealth of which he will use what he reasonably requires for his personal needs and will act as a trustee for the remainder to be used for the society. In this argument honesty on the part of the trustee is assumed.

If, however, in spite of the utmost effort, the rich do not become guardians of the poor in the true sense of the term and the latter are more and more crushed and die of hunger, what is to be done ? In trying to find out the solution of this riddle I have lighted on non-violent, non-cooperation and civil disobedience as the right and infallible means. The rich cannot accumulate wealth without the cooperation of the poor in society. If his knowledge were to penetrate to and spread amongst the poor, they would become strong and would learn how to free themselves by means of non-violence from the crushing inequalities which have brought them to the verge of starvation.[38]

Socialism and communism of the West are based on certain conceptions which are fundamentally different from ours. One such conception is their belief in essential selfishness of human nature. I do not subscribe to it for I know that the essential difference between man and the brute is that the former can respond to the call of the spirit in him, can rise superior to the passions that he owns in common with the brute and, therefore, superior to selfishness and violence, which belong to the brute nature and not to the immortal

spirit of man. That is the fundamental conception of Hinduism, which has years of penance and austerity at the back of discovery of this truth. That is why, whilst we have had saints who have worn out their bodies and laid down their lives in order to explore the secrets of the soul, we have had none, as in the West, who laid down their lives in exploring the remotest or the highest regions of the earth. Our socialism or communism should, therefore, be based on non-violence and on harmonious co-operation of labour and capital, landlord and tenant.[39]

I must refuse to insult the naked by giving them clothes they do not need, instead of giving them work which they sorely need. I will not commit the sin of becoming their patron, but on learning that I had assisted in impoverishing them, I would give them neither crumbs nor cast-off clothing, but the best of my food and clothes and associate myself with them in work.

God created man to work for his food and said that those who ate without work were thieves.[40]

The law, that to live man must work, first came home to me upon reading Tolstoy's writing on Bread labour. But even before that I had begun to pay homage to it after reading Ruskin's *Unto This Last*. The divine law, that man must earn his bread by labouring with his own hands, was first stressed by a Russian writer named T. M. Bondaref. Tolstoy advertized it, and gave it wider publicity. In my view, the same principle has been set forth in the third chapter of the *Gita*, where we are told, that he who eats without offering sacrifice, eats stolen food. Sacrifice here can only mean Bread labour.

Reason too leads us to an identical conclusion. How can

a man, who does not do body labour, have the right to eat? 'In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat thy bread,' says the Bible. A millionaire cannot carry on for long, and will soon get tired of his life, if he rolls in his bed all day long, and is even helped to his food. He, therefore, induces hunger by exercise, and helps himself to the food he eats. If every one, whether rich or poor, has thus to take exercise in some shape or form, why should it not assume the form of productive, *i.e.*, Bread labour? No one asks the cultivator to take breathing exercise or to work his muscles. And more than nine-tenths of humanity lives by tilling the soil. How much happier, healthier and more peaceful would the world become, if the remaining tenth followed the example of the overwhelming majority, at least to the extent of labouring enough for their food! And many hardships, connected with agriculture, would be easily redressed, if such people took a hand in it. Again invidious distinctions of rank would be abolished, when every one without exception acknowledged the obligation of Bread labour. It is common to all the *varnas*. There is a world-wide conflict between capital and labour, and the poor envy the rich. If all worked for their bread, distinctions of rank would be obliterated; the rich would still be there, but they would deem themselves only trustees of their property, and would use it mainly in the public interest.

Bread labour is a veritable blessing to one who would observe Non-violence, worship Truth, and make the observance of *brahmacharya* a natural act. This labour can truly be related to agriculture alone. But are present, at any rate. everybody is not in a position to take to it. A person can therefore spin or weave, or take up carpentry or smithery, instead of tilling the soil, always regarding agriculture however to be the ideal. Every one must be his own scavenger. Eva-

cuation is as necessary as eating; and the best thing would be for every one to dispose of his own waste. If this is impossible, each family should see to its own scavenging. I have felt for years, that there must be something radically wrong, where scavenging has been made the concern of a separate class in society. We have no historical record of the man, who first assigned the lowest status to this essential sanitary service. Whoever he was, he by no means did us a good. We should, from our very childhood, have the idea impressed upon our minds that we are all scavengers, and the easiest way of doing so is, for every one who has realized this, to commence Bread labour as a scavenger. Scavenging, thus intelligently taken up, will help one to a true appreciation of the equality of man.[41]

Economic equality is the master-key to non-violent independence. Working for economic equality means abolishing the eternal conflict between capital and labour. It means the levelling down of the few rich in whose hands is concentrated the bulk of the nation's wealth, on the one hand, and the levelling up of the semi-starved naked millions, on the other. A non-violent system of government is clearly an impossibility so long as the wide gulf between the rich and the hungry millions persists. The contrast between the palaces of New Delhi and the miserable hovels of the poor labouring class nearby cannot last one day in a free India in which the poor will enjoy the same power as the richest in the land. A violent and bloody revolution is a certainty one day unless there is a voluntary abdication of riches and the power that riches give and sharing them for the common good.[42]

' I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the

following test. Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to *him*. Will he gain anything by it ? Will it restore him to a control over his own life and destiny ? In other words, will it lead to *Swaraj* for the hungry and spiritually starving millions ?

Then you will find your doubts and yourself melting away.[43]

VI. FOR THE WELL-BEING OF THE NATION

1. What India Stands for

India is to me the dearest country in the world, not because it is my country but because I have discovered the greatest goodness in it. . .[1]

Everything in India attracts me. It has everything that a human being with the highest possible aspirations can want.[2]

India is essentially *karmabhumi* (land of duty) in contradistinction to *bhogabhumi* (land of enjoyment).[3]

If we could learn the lesson of dying without killing, India, which is celebrated in legend and history as *karmabhumi*—the land of duty, would become a virtual Eden—the image of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.[4]

If India makes violence her creed, and I have survived, I would not care to live in India. She will cease to evoke any pride in me. My patriotism is subservient to my religion. I cling to India like a child to its mother's breast because I feel that she gives me the spiritual nourishment I need. She has the environment that responds to my highest aspirations. When that faith is gone, I shall feel like an orphan without hope of ever finding a guardian.[5]

It is my fixed conviction, daily growing on me, that we

shall not make this unhappy land happy, except by purity of conduct, which spelt otherwise, means Truth and Non-violence.[6]

I venture to suggest, in all humility, that if India reaches her destiny through Truth and Non-violence, she will have made no small contribution to the world peace for which all the nations of the earth are thirsting, and she would also have, in that case made some slight return for the help that those nations have been freely giving to her.[7]

I feel in the inmost recesses of my heart. . . that the world is sick unto death of blood-spilling. The world is seeking a way out, and I flatter myself with the belief that perhaps it will be the privilege of the ancient land of India to show that way out to the hungering world.[8]

I believe that the civilization India has evolved is not to be beaten in the world. Nothing can equal the seeds sown by our ancestors.[9]

India's destiny lies not along the bloody way of the West, of which she shows signs of tiredness, but along the boldless way of peace that comes from a simple and godly life. India is in danger of losing her soul. She cannot lose it and live. She must not, therefore, lazily and helplessly say, 'I cannot escape the onrush from the West.' She must be strong enough to resist it for her own sake and that of the world.[10]

I am humble enough to admit that there is much that we can profitably assimilate from the West. Wisdom is no monopoly of one continent or one race.[11]

European civilization is no doubt suited for the Europeans, but it will mean ruin for India, if we endeavour to copy it. This is not to say that we may not adopt and assimilate whatever may be good and capable of assimilation by us as it does not also mean that even the Europeans will not have to part with whatever evil might have crept into it. The incessant search for material comforts and their multiplication, is such an evil, and I make bold to say that the Europeans themselves will have to remodel their outlook, if they are not to perish under the weight of the comforts to which they are becoming slaves. It may be that my reading is wrong, but I know that for India to run after the Golden Fleece is to court certain death. Let us engrave in our hearts the motto of a Western philosopher, 'plain living and high thinking'. Today it is certain that the millions cannot have high living and we the few who profess to do the thinking for the masses run the risk, in a vain search after high living, of missing high thinking.[12]

There is nothing to prevent me from profiting by the light that may come out of the West. Only I must take care that I am not overpowered by the glamour of the West. I must not mistake the glamour for true light.[13]

I do not want my house to be walled in all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any. I refuse to live in other people's houses as an interloper, a beggar, or a slave.[14]

We must not be entrapped by false analogies. European writers are handicapped for want of experience and accurate information. They cannot guide us beyond a certain

measures if they have to generalize from European examples which cannot be on all fours with Indian conditions, because in Europe they have nothing like the conditions of India, not even excluding Russia.

What may be, therefore, true of Europe is not necessarily true of India. We know, too, that each nation has its own characteristics and individuality. India has her own; and if we are to find out a true solution for her many ills, we shall have to take all idiosyncrasies of her constitution into account, and then prescribe a remedy. I claim that, to industrialize India in the same sense as Europe, is to attempt the impossible. India has stood many a storm. Each has left its own indelible mark, it is true, but she has hitherto dauntlessly maintained her individuality. India is one of the few nations of the earth which have witnessed the fall of many civilizations herself remaining scatheless. India is one of the few nations on the earth which have retained some of their ancient institutions, although they have been overlaid with superstition and error. But she has hitherto shown an inherent capacity for purging herself of error and superstition. My faith in her ability to solve the economic problem that faces her millions has never been so bright as it is today.[15]

The pendemonium that is going on in Europe shows that modern civilization represents forces of evil and darkness, whereas the ancient *i.e.*, Indian civilization, represents, in its essence, the Divine Force. Modern civilization is chiefly materialistic, as ours is chiefly spiritual. Modern civilization occupies itself in the investigation of the laws of matter, and employs the human ingenuity in inventing or discovering means of production and weapons of destruction; ours is chiefly occupied in exploring spiritual laws.

Our *Shastras* lay down unequivocally that a proper obser-

vance of truth, chastity, scrupulous regard for all life, abstention from coveting others' possessions and refusal to hoard anything but what is necessary for our daily wants is indispensable for a right life, that without it a knowledge of the Divine Element is an impossibility. Our civilization tells us with daring certainty that a proper and perfect cultivation of the quality of *Ahimsa* which, in its active form, means purest love and pity, brings the whole world to our feet. The author of this discovery gives a wealth of illustration which carries conviction with it..... It should be remembered that in practising *Ahimsa,* there need not be any reciprocation, though, as a matter of fact, in its final stages it commands reciprocation. Many of us believe, and I am one of them, that through our civilization we have a message to deliver to the world.[16]

2. India is one Nation

I do not wish to suggest that because we were one nation we had no differences, but it is submitted that our leading men travelled throughout India either on foot or in bullock-carts. They learned one another's languages and there was no aloofness between them. What do you think could have been the intention of those farseeing ancestors of ours who established Setubandha (Rameshwar) in the South, Jagannath in the East and Hardwar in the North as places of pilgrimage? You will admit they were no fools. They knew that worship of God could have been performed just as well at home. They taught us that those whose hearts were aglow with righteousness had the Ganges in their own homes. But they saw that India was one undivided land so made by nature. They, therefore, argued that it must be one nation. Arguing thus, they established holy places in various parts of India.

And we Indians are one as no two Englishmen are. Only you and I and others who consider ourselves civilized and superior persons imagine that we are many nations.[1]

India cannot cease to be one nation because people belonging to different religions live in it. The introduction of foreigners does not necessarily destroy the nation; they merge in it. A country is one nation only when such a condition obtains in it. That country must have a faculty for assimilation. India has ever been such a country. In reality, there are as many religions as there are individuals; but those who are conscious of the spirit of nationality do not interfere with one another's religion. If the Hindus believe that India should be peopled only by Hindus, they are living in dreamland. The Hindus, the Mohammedans, the Parsis and the Christians who have made India their country are fellow countrymen, and they will have to live in unity, if only for their own interest. In no part of the world are one nationality and one religion synonymous terms; nor has it ever been so in India.[2]

Both Hindus and Muslims are sons of India. Our mortal mother who gives us birth is entitled to our reverence and worship. Such worship purifies the soul. How much more worthy of our common allegiance and reverence must be our Motherland then, the Imperishable Mother on whose breast we are borne and will die? All those who are born in this country and claim her as their Motherland, whether they be Hindu, Muslim, Parsi, Christian, Jain or Sikh, are equally her children and are, therefore, brothers, united together with a bond stronger than that of blood.[3]

Hindustan belongs to all those who are born and bred

here and who have no other country to look to. Therefore, it belongs to Parsis, Beni Israels, to Indian Christians, Muslims and other non-Hindus as much as to Hindus. Free India will be no Hindu *raj,* it will be Indian *raj* based not on the majority of any religious sect or community but on the representatives of the whole people without distinction of religion. I can conceive of a mixed majority putting the Hindus in a minority. They would be elected for their record of service and merits. Religion is a personal matter which should have no place in politics.....[4]

(Linguistic) redistribution should not militate against the organic unity of India. Autonomy does not and should not mean disruption, or that hereafter provinces could go the way they chose, independent of one another and of the Centre. If each province begins to look upon itself as a separate, sovereign unit, India's independence will lose its meaning and with it will vanish the freedom of the various units as well.....

The world outside does not know us as Gujaratis, Maharashtrians, Tamilians etc., but only as Indians.

We must, therefore, resolutely discourage all fissiparous tendencies and feel and behave as Indians.[5]

Provincialism of a healthy type there is, and always will be. There is no meaning in having separate provinces, if there were no differences, though healthy, between them. But our provincialism must never be narrow or exclusive. It should be conducive to the interest of the whole country of which the provinces are but parts. They may be likened to tributaries of a mighty river. The tributaries promote its mightiness. Their strength and purity will be reflected in the majestic stream. It must be thus with the provinces. Every-

thing that the provinces do must be for the glory of the whole. If the great contribution of Rabindranath glorifies Bengal, it glorifies also India. Does not his influence pervade the whole of India ? Dadabhai lived not merely for the Parsis, not merely for Bombay, but for the whole of India. There is no room for exclusiveness or jealousy between province and province, unless India is to be dismembered into warring countries, each living for itself, and, if possible, at the expense of the rest. The Congress will have lived in vain if such a calamity descends upon the country. Every attempt at dividing India into watertight compartments must be resisted. India's destiny is to become a strong, independent nation making her unique contribution to the world's progress. Our patriotism is at no stage exclusive. We do not desire prosperity at the expense of the other nations of the earth. A time must come when we will be able to say : "We are no less citizens of the world than we are citizens of India." But the time will never come unless we know the art of being citizens of an Independent India. We cannot learn the art if we develop poisonous provincialisms. The right national life has to begin with the individual. I wish to be strong and free so that not only I but my neighbour also may benefit by my strength and freedom. We, as individuals or provinces, must bring out best fruit to the altar of the Motherland.[6]

Caste distinctions have taken such deep root amongst us that they have also infected the Muslims, Christians and followers of other religions in India. It is true that class barriers are also to be found in more or less degree in other parts of the world. This means that it is a distemper common to the human race. It can be eliminated only by the inculcation of

religion in its true sense. I have not found sanction for such barriers and distinctions in the scriptures of any religion.

In the eye of religion all men are equal. Learning, intellect or riches do not entitle one to claim superiority over those who are lacking in these. If any person is suffused and sanctified with the purifying essence and the discipline of true religion, he regards himself under the obligation to share his advantages with those who have fewer.[7]

There must be a breach in the double wall of caste and province. If India is one and indivisible, surely there should be no artificial divisions creating innumerable little groups which would neither interdine nor intermarry. There is no religion in this cruel custom. It would not do to plead the individuals cannot make the commencement, and that they must wait till the whole society is ripe for the change. No reform has ever been brought about except through intrepid individuals breaking down inhuman customs or usages.[8]

What does unity consist in and how can it be best promoted ? The answer is simple. It consists in our having a common purpose, a common goal and common sorrows. It is best promoted by co-operating to reach the common goal, by sharing one another's sorrows and by mutual toleration.[9]

The whole world is impressed by the fact that India has achieved independence without bloodshed. We have to be worthy of that independence by our right conduct.[10]

What I would like the New India of my dream to do is to lay the foundation of a new life in keeping with its natural surroundings..... The organization of the best society is the aim to which New India should dedicate herself.[11]

□

India is now free, and the reality is now clearly revealed to me. Now that the burden of subjection has been lifted, all the forces of good have to be marshalled in one great effort to build a country which forsakes the accustomed method of violence in order to settle human conflicts, whether it is between two states or between two sections of the same people. I have yet the faith that India would rise to the occasion and prove to the world that the birth of two new States would be, not a menace, but a blessing to the rest of mankind.[12]

If a minority in India, minority on the score of its religious profession, is made to feel small on that account, I can only say that this India is not the India of my dreams. In the India for whose fashioning I have worked all my life, everyman enjoys equality of status whatever his religion is. The State is bound to be wholly secular. I go so far as to say that no denominational educational institution in it should enjoy State patronage.

For God-fearing men all religions are good and equal, only the followers of different religions quarrel against one another and thereby deny their respective religions. I hope those in the Union of India would be worthy of their faiths and would be proud to call themselves sons and daughters of the same soil, claiming perfect equality in the eyes of the law. Religion is no test of nationality but a personal matter between man and his God. In the sense of nationality they are Indians first and Indians last, no matter what religion they profess.[13]

3. India of my Dreams

I shall work for an India, in which the poorest shall feel

that it is their country in whose making they have an effective voice; an India in which there shall be no high class and low class of people; an India in which all communities shall live in perfect harmony. There can be no room in such an India for the curse of untouchability or the curse of intoxicating drinks and drugs. Women shall enjoy the same rights as men. Since we shall be at peace with all the rest of the world, neither exploiting nor being exploited, we should have the smallest army imaginable. All interests not in conflict with the interests of the dumb millions will be scrupulously respected, whether foreign or indigenous. Personally I hate distinction between foreign and indigenous. This is the India of my dreams....I shall be satisfied with nothing less.[1]

My *Swaraj* is to keep intact the genius of our civilization. I want to write many new things but they must all be written on the Indian slate. I would gladly borrow from the West when I can return the amount with decent interest.[2]

The *Swaraj* of my dreams is the poor man's *Swaraj*. The necessaries of life should be enjoyed by you in common with those enjoyed by the princes and the monied men. But that does not mean that you should have palaces like theirs. They are not necessary for happiness. You or I would be lost in them. But you ought to get all the ordinary amenities of life that a rich man enjoys. I have not the slightest doubt that *Swaraj* is not *Poorna Swaraj* until these amenities are guaranteed to you under it.[3]

"When would India be said to have attained complete independence ?"

When the masses feel that they can improve their lot by

their own effort and can shape their destiny the way they like.[4]

I have believed and repeated times without number that India is to be found not in its few cities but in its 7,00,000 villages. But we town-dwellers have believed that India is to be found in its towns and the villages were created to minister our needs. We have hardly ever paused to inquire if those poor folk get sufficient to eat and clothe themselves with and whether they have a roof to shelter themselves from sun and rain.[5]

The cities with their insolent torts are a constant menace to the life and liberty of the villagers.[6]

If the cities want to demonstrate that their population will live for the villagers of India, the bulk of their resources should be spent in ameliorating the condition of the poor.[7]

Villagers are being exploited and drained by the cities.... Under my scheme nothing will be allowed to be produced by the cities which can be equally well-produced by the villages. The proper function of cities is to serve as clearing houses for village products....The villages must become self-sufficient. I see no other solution if one has to work in terms of *Ahimsa*.[8]

The cities are capable of taking care of themselves. It is the villages we have to turn to. We have to disabuse them of their prejudices, their superstitions, their narrow outlook and we can do so in no other manner than that of staying amongst them and sharing their joys and sorrows and spreading education and intelligent information among them.[9]

We must identify ourselves with the villagers who toil under the hot sun beating on their bent backs and see how we would like to drink water from the pool in which the villagers bathe, wash their clothes and pots, in which their cattle drink and roll. Then and not till then shall we truly represent the masses and they will, as surely as I am writing this, respond to every call.[10]

We have to teach them how to economize time, health and money. Lionel Curtis described our villages as dung-heaps. We have to turn them into model villages. Our village-folk do not get fresh air though they are sorrounded by fresh air; they don't get fresh food though they are sorrounded by the freshest foods. I am talking like a missionary in this matter of food, because my mission is to make villages a thing of beauty.[11]

The idea behind the village industries scheme is that we should look to the villages for the supply of our daily needs and that, when we find that some needs are not so supplied, we should see whether with a little trouble and organization, they cannot be profitably supplied by the villagers. In estimating the profit, we should think of the villagers, not of ourselves. It may be that, in the initial stages, we might have to pay a little more than the ordinary price and get an inferior article in the bargain. Things will improve, if we will interest ourselves in the supplier of our needs and insist on his doing better and take the trouble of helping to do better.[12]

The villagers should develop such a high degree of skill that articles prepared by them should command a ready market outside. When our villages are fully developed,

there will be no dearth in them of men with a high degree of skill and artistic talent. There will be village poets, village artists, village architects, linguists and research workers. In short, there will be nothing in life worth having which will not be had in the villages. Today, the villages are dung-heaps. Tomorrow, they will be like tiny gardens of Eden where dwell highly intelligent folk whom no one can deceive or exploit.[13]

God created man to work for his food, and said that those who ate without work were thieves. Eighty per cent of Indians are compulsorily thieves half the year. Is it any wonder if India has become one vast prison? Hunger is the argument that is driving India to the spinning wheel. The call of the spinning wheel is the noblest of all. Because it is the call of love. And love is *Swaraj*.... The spinning wheel is the reviving draught for the millions of our dying countrymen and country-women. 'Why should I, who have no need to work for food, spin?' may be the question asked. Because I am eating what does not belong to me. I am living on the spoilation of my countrymen. Trace the course of every pice that finds its way into your pocket, and you will realize the truth of what I write. *Swaraj* has no meaning for the millions, if they do not know how to employ their enforced idleness.... A plea for the spinning wheel is a plea for recognizing the dignity of labour.[14]

Many people think that in advocating *Khadi,* I am sailing against a head wind and am sure to sink the ship of *Swaraj,* that I am taking the country to the Dark Ages. I do not propose to argue the case for *Khadi* in this brief survey. I have argued it sufficiently before. Here I want to show what every Congressman, and for that matter every Indian, can do

to advance the cause of *Khadi*. It connotes the beginning of economic freedom and equality of all in the country. "The proof of the pudding is in the eating". Let everyone try, and he or she will find out for himself or herself the truth of what I am saying. *Khadi* must be taken with all its implications. It means a wholesale *Swadeshi* mentality, a determination to find all the necessaries of life in India, and that, too, through the labour and intellect of the villagers. That means a reversal of the existing process. That is to say, that, instead of half a dozen cities of India and Great Britain living on the exploitation and the ruin of 700,000 villages of India, the latter will be largely self-contained, and will voluntarily serve the cities of India and even the outside world in so far as it benefits both the parties.

This needs a revolutionary change in the mentality and tastes of many. Easy though the non-violent way is in many respects, it is very difficult in many others. It vitally touches the life of every single Indian, makes him feel aglow with the possession of a power that has lain hidden within himself, and makes him proud of the identity with every drop of the ocean of Indian humanity. This non-violence is not the inanity which we have mistaken it for through all these long ages, but it is the most potent force as yet known to mankind and on which its very existence is dependent. It is that force which I have tried to present to the Congress and through it to the world. *Khadi,* to me, is the symbol of unity of Indian humanity, of its economic freedom and equality and, therefore, ultimately, in the poetic expression of Jawaharlal Nehru, "the livery of India's freedom".

But the *Khadi* mentality means decentralization of the production and distribution of the necessities of life. Therefore, the formula so far evolved is, every village to produce and use all its necessaries and, in addition, produce a certain

percentage as its contribution to the requirements of the cities.

Heavy industries will necessarily be centralized and nationalized. But they will occupy the least part of the vast national activity in the villages.[15]

I have already reminded you that if you have the *Swadeshi* spirit in you, you will refuse to look to the West for the supply of your major wants. I have no quarrel, in this time of extreme scarcity, if India imports food-stuffs and cloth from outside, provided it is proved that India is wholly unable to supply the two wants from within India. This is in no way proved. I have not hesitated to say, and I would repeat, that India is fully able to manufacture her own *Khadi* and grow her own food-stuffs in her numerous villages. But, alas, the people have become too lazy to look inward and insist on supplying these two wants from within India's borders. I will go even so far as to say that I will face starvation and nakedness rather than look to the West to supply the two needs. Without grim determination, it is not possible to do the right thing.[16]

We can realize truth and non-violence only in the simplicity of village life.... I must not fear if the world today is going the wrong way. It may be that India too will go that way and like the proverbial moth, burn itself eventually in the flame round which it dances more and more fiercely. But it is my bounden duty up to my last breath to try to protect India and, through India, the entire world from such a doom.[17]

My idea of Village *Swaraj* is that it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbours for its vital wants, and yet

inter-dependent for many others in which dependence is a necessity. Thus every village's first concern will be to grow its own food crops and cotton for its cloth. It should have a reserve for its cattle, recreation and playground for adults and children. Then if there is more land available, it will grow *useful* money crops, thus excluding *ganja,* tobacco, opium and the like. The village will maintain a village theatre, school and public hall. It will have its own water-works ensuring clean supply. This can be done through controlled wells and tanks. Education will be compulsory up to the final basic course. As far as possible every activity will be conducted on the cooperative basis. There will be no castes such as we have today, with their graded untouchability. Non-violence with its technique of *Satyagraha* and non-cooperation will be the sanction of the village community. There will be a compulsory service of village guards who will be selected by rotation from the register maintained by the village. The government of the village will be conducted by the *Panchayat* of five persons, annually elected by the adult villagers, male and female, possessing minimum prescribed qualifications. These will have all the authority and jurisdiction required. Since there will be no system of punishments in the accepted sense, this *Panchayat* will be the legislature, judiciary and executive combined to operate for its year of office.... I have not examined here the question of relations with the neighbouring villages and the centre, if any. My purpose is to present an outline of village government. Here there is perfect democracy based upon individual freedom. The individual is the architect of his own government. The law of non-violence rules him and his government. He and his village are able to defy the might of a world. For the law governing every villager is that he

will suffer death in the defence of his and his village's honour.[18]

In this structure composed of innumerable villages, there will be ever widening, never ascending circles. Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it will be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, the latter willing to perish for the circle of villages, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals, never aggressive in their arrogance but ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circle of which they are integral units. Therefore the outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle but will give strength to all within and drive its own strength from it.... No one... (will) be the first and none the last... (In it) every man and every woman knows what he or she wants and, what is more, knows that no one should want anything that others cannot have with equal labour.[19]

In the case of the Indian villager, an age-old culture is hidden under an encrustment of crudeness.... Behind the crude exterior, you will find a deep reservoir of spirituality.... You will not find such a thing in the West. Take away the encrustation, remove his chronic poverty and his illiteracy, and you have the finest specimen of what a cultured, cultivated, free citizen should be.[20]

4. Democracy

The highest form of freedom carries with it the greatest measure of discipline and humility. Freedom that comes from discipline and humility cannot be denied; unbridled

licence is a sign of vulgarity injurious alike to self and one's neighbours.[1]

A born democrat is a born disciplinarian. Democracy comes naturally to him who is habituated normally to yield willing obedience to all laws, human or divine. I claim to be a democrat both by instinct and training. Let those who are ambitious to serve democracy qualify themselves by satisfying first this acid test of democracy. Moreover, a democrat must be utterly selfless. He must think and dream not in terms of self or party but only of democracy. Only then does he acquire the right of civil disobedience. I do not want anybody to give up his convictions or to suppress himself. I do not believe that a healthy and honest difference of opinion will injure our cause. But opportunism, camouflage or patched up compromises certainly will. If you must dissent, you should take care that your opinions voice your innermost convictions and are not intended merely as a convenient party cry.

I value individual freedom but you must not forget that man is essentially a social being. He has risen to his present status by learning to adjust his individualism to the requirements of social progress. Unrestricted individualism is the law of the beast of the jungle. We have learnt to strike the mean between individual freedom and social restraint. Willing submission to social restraint for the sake of the well-being of the whole society enriches both the individual and the society of which one is a member.[2]

There is no human institution but has its dangers. The greater the institution the greater the chances of abuse. Democracy is a great institution and, therefore, it is liable to be greatly abused. The remedy, therefore, is not avoidance

of democracy but reduction of possibility of abuse to a minimum.[3]

(Democracy) is the art and science of mobilizing the entire physical, economic and spiritual resources of all the various sections of the people in the service of the common good of all.[4]

I felt compelled to come into the political field because I found I could not do even social work without touching politics. I feel that political work must be looked upon in terms of social and moral progress. In democracy no fact of life is untouched by politics.[5]

True democracy or the *Swaraj* of the masses can never come through untruthful and violent means, for the simple reason that the natural corollary to their use would be to remove all opposition through the suppression or extermination of the antagonists. That does not make for individual freedom. Individual freedom can have the fullest play only under a regime of unadulterated *Ahimsa.*[6]

My notion of democracy is that under it the weakest should have the same opportunity as the strongest. That can never happen except through non-violence. No country in the world today shows any but patronizing regard for the weak. . . .[7]

Democracy is an impossible thing until the power is shared by all, but let not democracy degenerate into mobocracy. Even a *pariah,* a labourer, who makes it possible for you to earn your living, will have his share in self-government. But you will have to touch their lives, go to them, see

their hovels, where they live packed like sardines. It is up to you to look after this part of humanity. It is possible for you to make their lives or mar their lives.[8]

We must train these masses of men who have a heart of gold, who feel for the country, who want to be taught and led. But a few intelligent, sincere workers are needed, and the whole nation can be organized to act intelligently and democracy can be evolved out of mobocracy.[9]

If we want to cultivate a true spirit of democracy, we cannot afford to be intolerant. Intolerance betrays want of faith in one's cause.[10]

Evolution of democracy is not possible if we are not prepared to hear the other side. We shut the doors of reason when we refuse to listen to our opponents or, having listened, make fun of them. If intolerance becomes a habit, we run the risk of missing the truth. Whilst with the limits that Nature has put upon our understanding we must act fearlessly according to the light vouchsafed to us, we must always keep an open mind and be ever ready to find that what we believed to be truth was, after all, untruth. This openness of mind strengthens the truth in us and removes the dross from it, if there is any.[11]

I have repeatedly observed that no school of thought can claim a monopoly of right judgment. We are all liable to err and are often obliged to revise our judgements. In a vast country like this, there must be room for all schools of honest thought. And the least, therefore, that we owe to ourselves as to others is to try to understand the opponents' view-point, and, if we cannot accept it, respect it as fully as we expect him to respect ours.[12]

True democracy cannot be worked by twenty men sitting at the centre. It has to be worked from below by the people of every village.[13]

A Government cannot succeed in becoming entirely non-violent, because it represents all people. I do not today conceive of such a golden age. But I do believe in the possibility of a predominantly non-violent society. And I am working for it.[14]

Most people do not understand the complicated machinery of the government. They do not realize that every citizen silently but nonetheless certainly sustains the government of the day in ways of which he has no knowledge. Every citizen therefore renders himself responsible for every act of his government. And it is quite proper to support it so long as the actions of the government are bearable. But when they hurt him and his nation, it becomes his duty to withdraw his support.[15]

I look upon an increase in the power of the State with the greatest fear because, although while apparently doing good by minimizing exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind, by destroying individuality, which lies at the root of all progress.[16]

For me, justice for the individual, be he the humblest, is everything. All else comes after.[17]

If the individual ceases to count, what is left of society? Individual freedom alone can make a man voluntarily surrender himself completely to the service of society. If it is wrested from him, he becomes an automation and society

is ruined. No society can possibly be built on a denial of individual freedom.[18]

Swaraj of a people means the sum-total of the *swaraj* (self-rule) of individuals. And such *swaraj* comes only from performance by individuals of their duty as citizens. In it no one thinks of his rights. They come, when they are needed, for better performance of duty.[19]

Rights accrue automatically to him who duly performs his duties. In fact the right to perform one's duties is the only right that is worth living for and dying for. It covers all legitimate rights. All the rest is grab under one guise or another, contains in it seeds of *Himsa*.[20]

The true source of rights is duty. If we all discharge our duties, rights will not be far to seek. If leaving duties unperformed we run after rights, they will escape us like a will-o'-the-wisp. The more we pursue the farther they will fly. The same teaching has been embodied, by Krishna, in the immortal words : "Action alone is thine. Leave then the fruit severely alone." Action is duty; fruit is the right.[21]

While power, super-imposed, always needs the help of police and military, power generated from within should have little or no use for them.[22]

Power is of two kinds. One is obtained by the fear of punishment, and the other by arts of love. Power based on love is thousand times more effective and permanent than the one derived from fear of punishment.[23]

A father wields power over his children; he may even

punish, but not by inflicting violence. The most effective exercise of power is that which irks least. Power rightly exercised must sit light as a flower; no one should feel the weight of it.[24]

I do not believe in the doctrine of the greatest good of the greatest number. It means, in its nakedness, that in order to achieve the supposed good of 51 per cent, the interest of 49 per cent may be, or rather should be, sacrificed. It is heartless doctrine and has done harm to humanity. The only real, dignified human doctrine is the greatest good of all, and this can only be achieved by uttermost self-sacrifice.[25]

In this age of democracy it is essential that desired results are achieved by the collective effort of the people. It will no doubt be good to achieve an objective through the effort of a supremely powerful individual, but it can never make the community conscious of its corporate strength. An individual's success will be like a millionaire doling free food to millions of starving people. We should, therefore, bend our energies to the fulfilment of... constructive programme.[26]

Anything that millions can do together becomes charged with a unique power.[27]

The bogey of shooting up of prices does not frighten me. If we have many sharks and we do not know how to combat them, we shall deserve to be eaten up by them. Then we shall know how to carry ourselves in the teeth of adversity. Real democracy people learn not from books, nor from the Government who are in name and in reality their servants. Hard experience is the most efficient teacher in democracy.[28]

Timidity has no place in democracy. When people in general believe in and want a particular thing, their representatives have but to give shape to their demand and make it feasible. A favourably manly attitude of the multitude has been found to go a long way in winning battles.[29]

If we say to ourselves that *Swaraj* having been won, we can now afford to sit easy we shall be doing the country the greatest harm.... Hitherto the fight with the British engaged all the energy of the people. That energy must now be mobilized to make the nation prosperous and strong, or else it will recoil upon us and breed discord and disruption.[30]

If the masses want to enjoy independence, they have first to learn the secret of observing voluntary discipline. Otherwise discipline would have to be imposed upon them by the powers that be. That would not be independence but its negation. Every people get the Government they deserve. If they indulged in hooliganism, so would the Government and its officials in the name of law and order. The result would not be freedom or independence but a balancing of anarchies, each trying to keep the other in check. Voluntary discipline is the first requisite of corporate freedom. If the people are well-behaved, the Government officials would become their true servants. Otherwise they would ride on their necks, not without a semblance of justification.[31]

It would be a distinct gain to the national cause, if the leaders and workers strictly keep their hours. No man is expected to do more than he really can. If, at the end of the day, there is surplus work left, or he cannot get through it without missing a meal or encroaching upon the hours of sleep or recreation, there is mismanagement somewhere. I

have no doubt that if we cultivate the habit of punctuality, acting according to programme, the index of national efficiency will go up, our advance towards our goal will be rapid, and the workers will be healthier and longer lived.[32]

Our moral standards are going down at such a rate that I can now see why our Satyagraha fights in the past lacked the real content and were reduced to mere passive resistance of the weak.[33]

I have therefore said that a man who wants to be good and do good in all circumstances must not hold power.[34]

Public money belongs to the poor public of India than whom there is none poorer on earth. We have to be more wakeful, more cautious, more careful; and let us be ready to account for every pie that we receive from the public.[35]

Carefully kept accounts are a *sine qua non* for any organization. Without properly kept accounts it is impossible to maintain truth in its pristine purity.[36]

If we do not account for every single pie we receive and do not make a judicious use of the funds, we shall deserve to be blotted out of public life.[37]

The public should be the bank for all public institutions, which should not last a day longer than the public wish. An institution run with the interest of accumulated capital ceases to be amenable to public opinion and becomes autocratic and self-righteous.[38]

After considerable experience with the many public

institutions which I have managed, it has become my firm conviction that it is not good to run public institutions on permanent funds. A permanent fund carries in itself the seed of the moral fall of the institution. A public institution means an institution conducted with the approval, and from the funds, of the public. When such an institution ceases to have public support, it forfeits its right to exist. Institutions maintained on permanent funds are often found to ignore public opinion, and are frequently responsible for acts contrary to it. In our country we experience this at every step. Some of the so-called religious trusts have ceased to render any accounts. The trustees have become the owners and are responsible to none. I have no doubt that the ideal is for public institutions to live, like nature, from day to day. The institution that fails to win public support has no right to exist as such[39]

5. Untouchability

It is a tragedy that religion for us means today nothing more than restrictions on food and drink, nothing more than adherence to a sense of superiority and inferiority. Let me tell you that there cannot be any grosser ignorance than this. Birth and observance of forms cannot determine one's superiority and inferiority. Character is the only determining factor. God did not create men with the badge of superiority or inferiority; no scripture which labels a human being as inferior or untouchable because of his or her birth can command our allegiance; it is a denial of God and Truth which is God.[1]

There is an ineffaceable blot that Hinduism today carries with it. I have declined to believe that it has been handed

down to us from immemorial times. I think that this miserable, wretched, enslaving spirit of 'untouchableness' must have come to us when we were at our lowest ebb. This evil has stuck to us and still remains with us....

Untouchability as it is practised in Hinduism today is, in my opinion, a sin against God and man and is, therefore, like a poison slowly eating into the very vitals of Hinduism. In my opinion, it has no sanction whatsoever in the Hindu *Shastras* taken as a whole....It has degraded both the untouchables and the touchables. It has stunted the growth of nearly 40 million human beings. They are denied even the ordinary amenities of life. The sooner, therefore, it is ended, the better for Hinduism, the better for India, and perhaps better for mankind in general.[2]

So far as I am concerned with the untouchability question it is one of life and death for Hinduism. As I have said repeatedly, if untouchability lives, Hinduism perishes, and even India perishes; but if untouchability is eradicated from the Hindu heart, root and branch, then Hinduism has a definite message for the world. I have said the first thing to hundreds of audiences but not the latter part. Now that is the utterance of a man who accepts Truth as God. It is therefore no exaggeration. If untouchability is an integral part of Hinduism, the latter is a spent bullet. But untouchability is a hideous untruth. My motive in launching the anti-untouchability campaign is clear. What I am aiming at is not every Hindu touching an 'untouchable', but every touchable Hindu driving untouchability from his heart, going through a complete change of heart.[3]

It is bad enough when dictated by selfish motives to consider ourselves high and other people low. But it is not

only worse but a double wrong when we tack religion to an evil like untouchability. It, therefore, grieves me when learned pundits come forward and invoke the authority of *Shastras* for a patent evil like untouchability. I have said, and I repeat today, that we, Hindus, are undergoing a period of probation. Whether we desire it or not, untouchability is going. But if during this period of probation we repent for the sin, if we reform and purify ourselves, history will record that one act as a supreme act of purification on the part of the Hindus. But if, through the working of the time spirit, we are compelled to do things against our will and Harijans come into their own, it will be no credit to the Hindus or to Hinduism. But I go a step further and say that if we fail in this trial, Hinduism and Hindus will perish.[4]

Harijan means 'a man of God'. All the religions of the world describe God preeminently as the Friend of the friendless, Help of the helpless and Protector of the weak. The rest of the world apart, in India who can be more friendless, helpless or weaker than the forty million or more Hindus of India who are classified as 'untouchables'? If, therefore, any body of people can be fitly described as men of God, they are surely these helpless, friendless and despised people. Hence, in the pages of *Navajivan*, I have always adopted Harijan as the name signifying 'untouchables'. Not that the change of name brings about any change of status, but one may at least be spared the use of a term which is itself one of reproach. When caste Hindus have of their own inner conviction and, therefore, voluntarily, got rid of the present-day untouchability we shall all be called Harijans, for, according to my humble opinion, caste Hindus will then have found favour with God and may, therefore, be fitly described as His men.[5]

Harijan service is a religious obligation. There is no room in it for cunning. It has to be absolutely truthful and non-violent. It can be accomplished only by sacrifice and penance. I very much fear that we shall not be able to win the trust of Harijans without self-purification. It should not surprise us if today they look upon all we do with suspicion and distrust. Hitherto we had been riding their shoulders. We must dismount if we would do justice to them, and regard them as we regard other Hindus.[6]

Economic and educational uplift is no doubt an essential part of true repentance by caste Hindus. It is a test of the sincerity of their professions. But the uplift will not be complete without the throwing open of temples. The throwing open of temples will be an admission of the religious equality of Harijans. It will be the surest sign of their ceasing to be the outcastes of Hinduism, which they are today.[7]

And when temples are thrown open to Harijans, schools, wells and many similar facilities will be automatically open to Harijans.[8]

A vigorous campaign with a definite time limit for the complete removal of all the disabilities under which the Harijans suffer ought to be launched. Emancipation of the Harijans can no longer be postponed to an indefinite distant date. It has to be realised here and now even like Independence. Independence itself will turn into bitter ashes in our mouth if the most useful section of the community is baulked of it essential rights.[9]

There will be under *Swaraj* no such scandal as that of the use of public temples being denied to untouchables when it

is allowed to all other Hindus. The authority of the *Vedas* and the other *Shastras* will not be denied but their interpretation will not rest with individuals but will depend upon the course of law in so far as these religious books will be used to regulate public conduct. Conscientious scruples will be respected, but not at the expense of public morals or the right of others. Those who will have extraordinary scruples will have themselves to suffer inconvenience and pay for the luxury. The law will not tolerate any arrogation of superiority by any person or class whether in the name of custom or religion.[10]

The real hunger of the Harijans which needs to be satisfied is for decent living as self-respecting, equal citizens, for a square deal as human beings, for freedom from fear, inculcation of clean and sanitary habits, thrift, industry, education. This requires perseverance, self-sacrifice and patient, intelligent labouring on our part. If you give me money to feed Harijans, I shall refuse to accept it. For I do not want to make beggars and idlers of them.[11]

One experience stands quite distinctly in my memory. It relates to my 21 days' fast for the removal of untouchability. I had gone to sleep the night before without the slightest idea of having to declare a fast next morning. At about 12 o'clock in the night something wakes me up suddenly, and some voice—within or without, I cannot say—whispers, 'Thou must go on a fast.' 'How many days?' I ask. This voice again says, 'Twenty-one days.' 'When does it begin?' I ask. It says, 'You begin tomorrow.' I went quietly off to sleep after making the decision. I did not tell anything to my companions until after the morning prayer. I placed into their hands a slip of paper announcing my decision and

asking them not to argue with me, as the decision was irrevocable. Well, the doctors thought I would not survive this fast. But something within me said that I would, and that I must go forward. That kind of experience has never in my life happened before or after that date.[12]

6. Women

Woman is the companion of man gifted with equal mental capacities. She has the right to participate in minutest detail in the activities of man, and she has the same right of freedom and liberty as he. She is entitled to a supreme place in her own sphere of activity as man is in his. This ought to be the natural condition of things, and not as a result only of learning to read and write. By sheer force of a vicious custom, even the most ignorant and worthless men have been enjoying a superiority over women which they do not deserve and ought not to have.[1]

.... Woman is the incarnation of *Ahimsa*. *Ahimsa* means infinite love, which again means infinite capacity for suffering. Who but woman, the mother of man, shows this capacity in the largest measure ? She shows it as she carries the infant and feeds it during nine months and derives joy in the suffering involved. What can beat the suffering caused by the pangs of labour. But she forgets them in the joy of creation. Who again suffers daily so that her babe may wax from day to day ? Let her transfer that love to the whole of humanity, let her forget she ever was or can be the object of man's lust. And she will occupy her proud position by the side of man as his mother, maker and silent leader.[2]

For the courage of self-sacrifice woman is any day superior to man, as I believe man is to woman for the courage of the brute.[3]

To call woman the weaker sex is a libel; it is man's injustice to woman. If by strength is meant brute strength, then indeed is woman less brute than man. If by strength is meant moral power, then woman is immeasurably man's superior. Has she not greater intuition, is she not more self-sacrificing, has she not greater powers of endurance, has she not greater courage ? Without her, man could not be. If non-violence is the law of our being, the future is with woman.[4]

If I were born a woman, I would rise in rebellion against any pretension on the part of man that woman is born to be his plaything. I have mentally become a woman in order to steal into her heart. I could not steal into my wife's heart until I decided to treat her differently than I used to do, and so I restored to her all her rights by dispossessing myself of all my so-called rights as her husband.[5]

Of all the evils for which man has made himself responsible, none is so degrading, so shocking or so brutal as his abuse of the better half of humanity to me, the female sex, not the weaker sex. It is the nobler of the two, for it is even today the embodiment of sacrifice, silent suffering humility, faith and knowledge.[6]

Woman must cease to consider herself the object of man's lust. The remedy is more in her hands than man's.[7]

Women are special custodians of all that is pure and religious in life. Conservative by nature, if they are slow

to shed superstitious habits, they are also slow to give up all that is pure and noble in life.[8]

It is sad to think that the *Smritis* contain texts which can command no respect from men who cherish the liberty of woman as their own, and who regard her as the mother of the race. Of course, there are in the *Smritis* texts which give woman her due place and regard her with deep veneration. The question arises as to what to do with the *Smritis* that contain texts that are in conflict with other texts in the same *Smritis,* and that are repugnant to the moral sense. I have already suggested often enough that all that is printed in the name of scriptures need not be taken as the word of God or the inspired word. But everyone can't decide what is good and authentic, and what is bad and interpolated. There should, therefore, be some authoritative body that would revise all that passes under the name of scriptures, expurgate all the texts that have no moral value, or are contrary to the fundamentals of religion and morality, and present such an edition for the guidance of Hindus. The certainty that the whole mass of Hindus, and the persons accepted as religious leaders, will not accept the validity of such authority, need not interfere with the sacred enterprise. Work done sincerely and in the spirit of service will have its effect on all in the long run, and will most assuredly help those who are badly in need of such assistance.[9]

Hindu culture has erred on the side of excessive subordination of the wife to the husband, and has insisted on the complete merging of the wife in the husband. This has resulted in the husband sometimes usurping and exercising authority that reduces him to the level of the brute.[10]

But I am uncompromising in the matter of woman's rights. In my opinion, she should labour under no legal disability not suffered by man. I should treat the daughters and sons on a footing of perfect equality. As women begin to realize their strength, as they must, in proportion to the education they receive, they will naturally resent the glaring inequalities to which they are subjected. . . .[11]

If the husband is a god, the wife also is a goddess. She is not a slave, but a friend and companion with equal rights. Each is a teacher (Guru) for the other.

A daughter's share must be equal to that of a son.

The husband's earnings are the joint property of husband and wife, as he makes money by her assistance, if only as a cook.

If a husband is unjust to his wife, she has the right to live separately.

Both have equal rights to the children. Each would forfeit these rights after they have grown up, and even before that if he or she is unfit for them.

In short, I admit no distinction between man and woman except such as has been made by Nature and can be seen with human eyes.[12]

A strong public opinion should be created in condemnation of the degrading practice of dowry, and young men, who soil their fingers with such ill-gotten gold, should be excommunicated from society. Parents of girls should cease to be dazzled by English degrees, and should not hesitate to travel outside their little castes and provinces to secure true gallant young men for their daughters.[13]

There is no doubt that the custom (of dowry) is heart-

less. The system has to go. Marriage must cease to be a matter of arrangement made by parents for money. The system is intimately connected with caste. So long as the choice is restricted to a few hundred young men or young women of a particular caste, the system will persist no matter what is said against it. The girls or boys or their parents will have to break the bonds of caste, if the evil is to be eradicated.[14]

We cry out for cow protection in the name of religion, but we refuse protection to the human cow in the shape of the girl widow. We would resent force in religion. But in the name of religion we force widowhood upon our girl widows who could not understand the import of the marriage ceremony. To force widowhood upon little girls is a brutal crime for which we Hindus are daily paying dearly. If our conscience was truly awakened there would be no marriage before 15, let alone widowhood, and we would declare that these girls were never religiously married. There is no warrant in any *Shastra* for such widowhood. Voluntary widowhood, consciously adopted by a woman who has felt the affection of a partner, adds grace and dignity to life, sanctifies the home and uplifts religion itself. . . .[15]

Q. You have referred to numerous social abuses prevalent among us. They are there; but, then, if the men are unwilling to effect the necessary social changes, what can we women do about it ?

A. There is no occasion for women to consider themselves subordinate or inferior to men. Languages proclaim that woman is half of man and, by parity of reasoning, man is half of woman. They are not two separate entities, but halves of one. The English language goes further and calls

woman the better half of man. Therefore, I advise women to resort to civil rebellion against all undesirable and unworthy restraints. All restraints to be beneficial must be voluntary. There is no possibility of harm resulting from civil rebellion. It presupposes purity and reasoned resistance.[16]

I want you, sisters, to give as much as you can for Harijan cause. You have asked me how you can serve the Harijans. I want you, above everything else, to root out untouchability from your hearts and serve the Harijan boys and girls as you would serve your own children. You should love them as your own relatives, your own brothers and sisters, children of the same Mother India. I have worshipped woman as the living embodiment of the spirit of service and sacrifice. Man can never be your equal in the spirit of selfless service with which Nature has endowed you.[7]

Woman has a compassionate heart which melts at the sight of suffering. If, then, the sufferings of Harijans move you and you give up untouchability and, with it, the distinctions of high and low, Hinduism will be purified and Hindu society will take great stride towards spiritual progress. It will ultimately mean the well-being of the whole of India, *i.e.* of 35 crores of human beings....[18]

It has been my privilege to witness many touching and soul-stirring scenes during a busy life packed with a variety of rich experiences. But, at the moment of writing this, I cannot recall a scene more touching than that of the Harijan cause. I had just finished my speech at Badagara. In it, I had made a reasoned appeal to the women present for jewellery. I had finished speaking and was selling the pre-

sents received, when gently walked up to the platform Kaumudi, a girl 16 years old. She took out one bangle and asked me if I would give my autograph. I was preparing to give it, when off came the other bangle. She had only one on each hand. I said : "You need not give me both. I shall give you the autograph for one bangle only."

She replied by taking off her golden necklace. This was no easy performance. It had to be disengaged from her long plait of hair. But the Malabar girl that she is, she had no false modesty about performing the whole process before a wondering public, counting several thousands of men and women. "But have you the permission of your parents!" I asked. There was no answer. She had not yet completed her renunciation. Her hands automatically went to her ears and out came her jewelled ear-rings amid the ringing cheers of the public, whose expression of joy was no longer to be suppressed. I asked her again whether she had her parents' consent to the sacrifice. Before I could extract any answer from the shy girl, some one told me that her father was present at the meeting, that he was himself helping me by bidding for the addresses I was auctioning, and that he was as generous as his daughter in giving to worthy causes. I reminded Kaumudi that she was not to have ornaments replaced. She resolutely assented to the condition. As I handed her the autograph, I could not help prefacing it with the remark : "Your renunciation is a truer ornament than the jewellery you have discarded."[19]

7. National Language

Our language is the reflection of ourselves, and if you tell me that our languages are too poor to express the best thought, then I say that the sooner we are wiped out of exist-

ence the better for us. Is there a man who dreams that English can ever become the national language of India ? Why this handicap on the nation ?...I had the privilege of a close conversation with some Poona professors. They assured me that every Indian youth, because he reached his knowledge through the English language, lost at least six precious years of life. Multiply that by the number of students turned out by our schools and colleges, and find out for yourselves how many thousand years have been lost to the nation. The charge against us is that we have no initiative. How can we have any if we are to devote the precious years of our life to the mastery of the foreign tongue ? We fail in this attempt also.[1]

Indeed, we never master the English language : with some exceptions, it has not been possible for us to do so; we can never express ourselves as clearly in English as in the mother-tongue. How dare we rub out of our memory all the years of our infancy ? But that is precisely what we do when we commence our higher education as we call it, through the medium of a foreign tongue. This creates a breach in our life, for which we shall have to pay dearly and heavily.[2]

I have heard it said that after all it is English educated India which is leading and which is doing all the things for the nation. It would be monstrous if it were otherwise. The only education we receive is English education. Surely, we must show something for it. But suppose that we had been receiving, during the past fifty years, education through our vernaculars, what should we have today ? We should have today a free India; we should have our educated men not as if they were foreigners in their own land, but speaking to the heart of the nation; they would be working among the poorest

of the poor, and whatever they would have gained during the past fifty years would be a heritage for the nation. Today, even our wives are not the sharers in our best thought. Look at Prof. Bose and Prof. Ray and their brilliant researches. Is it not a shame that their researches are not the common property of the masses ?[3]

The greatest service one can render society is to free ourselves and it from the superstitious regard we have learnt to pay to the learning of the English language. It is the medium of instruction in our schools and colleges. It is becoming the *lingua franca* of the country. Our best thoughts are expressed in it. This belief in the necessity of English training has enslaved us. It has unfitted us for true national service. Were it not for force of habit, we could not fail to see that by reason of English being the medium of instruction, our intellect has been segregated, we have been isolated from the masses, the best minds of the nation have become caged, and the masses have not received the benefit of the new ideas we have received. We have been engaged these past sixty years in memorizing strange words and their pronunciation instead of assimilating facts. In the place of building upon the foundation, training received from our parents, we have almost unlearnt it. There is no parallel to this in history. It is a national tragedy.

This first and the greatest social service we can render is to revert to our vernaculars, to restore Hindi to its natural place as the national language, and begin carrying on all our provincial proceedings in our respective vernaculars and national proceedings in Hindi. We ought not to rest till our schools and colleges give us instruction through the vernaculars.[4]

English is today studied because of its commercial and so-called political value. Our boys think, and rightly in the present circumstances, that without English they cannot get Government service. Girls are taught English as a passport to marriage. I know several instances of women wanting to learn English so that they may be able to talk to Englishmen in English. I know husbands who are sorry that their wives cannot talk to them and their friends in English. I know families in which English is being made the mother tongue. .....It is unbearable to me that the vernaculars should be crushed and starved as they have been. I cannot tolerate the idea of parents writing to their children, or husbands writing to their wives, not in their own vernaculars, but in English.[5]

Whilst I have freely acknowledged my debt to Western culture, I can say that whatever service I have been able to render to the nation has been due entirely to the retention by me of Eastern culture to the extent it has been possible. I should have been thoroughly useless to the masses as an anglicized, denationalized being, knowing little of, caring less for and perhaps even despising their ways, habits, thoughts and aspirations.[6]

Whenever I have addressed student audiences, I have been surprised by the demand for English. You know, or ought to know, that I am a lover of the English language. But I do believe that the students of India, who are expected to throw in their lot with the teeming millions and to serve them, will be better qualified if they pay more attention to Hindi than to English. I do not say that you should not learn English; learn it by all means. But, so far as I can see, it cannot be the language of the millions of Indian homes. It will be confined to thousands or tens of thousands, but it will not

reach the millions. Therefore, I am delighted when the students ask me to speak in Hindi.[7]

Let us now consider the question of a national language. If English is to become our national language, then it must be made a compulsory subject in our schools. Let us first consider whether English can become our national language.

Some of our learned men, who are also good patriots, contend that even to raise the question betrays ignorance. In their opinion, it already occupies that place.

On a superficial consideration, this view appears correct. Looking at the educated section of our society, one is likely to gain the impression that, in the absence of English, all our work would come to a stop. But deeper reflection will show that English cannot and ought not to become our national language.

Let us see what should be the requirements of a national language.

1. It should be easy to learn for Government officials.
2. It should be capable of serving as a medium of religious, economic and political intercourse throughout India.
3. It should be the speech of the majority of the inhabitants of India.
4. It should be easy to learn for the whole of the country.
5. In choosing this language, considerations of temporary or passing interest should not count.

English does not fulfil any of these requirements..... Then, which is the language which fulfils all the five requirements? We shall have to admit that it is Hindi.[8]

I have no doubt that Hindustani would be the best suited interprovincial language for all Indians. Neither Persianized Urdu nor Sanskritized Hindi can easily be understood by the

masses. With the end of British *Raj,* the English language has to go, as the common medium of speech or the court language. It is a usurpation. I honour the English language in its own place. It can never become India's national language.[9]

But now there seems to be a quarrel about the national language. What is it to be? I am told it is to be Hindi written in the Devanagari script. I can never agree to that. I have been twice President of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. I cannot be an enemy of Hindi and Urdu. But I have realized that the language of the common man, the *lingua franca* of India, can only be an amalgamation of simple Hindi and simple Urdu written in the Devanagari and Urdu script, *i.e.*, Hindustani. I know many Hindus, leave alone the Muslims, who do not understand Sanskritized Hindi, nor can they write in Devanagari script. Therefore, I would stick to Hindustani even if I have to stand alone.[10]

The medium of a foreign language through which higher education has been imparted in India has caused incalculable intellectual and moral injury to the nation. We are too near our own times to judge the enormity of the damage done. And we who have received such education have both to be victims and judges—an almost impossible feat. The medium of instruction should be altered at once at any cost, the provincial languages being given their rightful place. I would prefer temporary chaos in higher education to the criminal waste that is daily accumulating.[11]

The study of Sanskrit is being sadly neglected. I belong to a generation which believed in the study of the ancient

languages. I do not believe that such a study is a waste of time and effort. I believe it is an aid to the study of modern languages. This is truer of Sanskrit than of any other ancient language so far as India is concerned, and every nationalist should study it because it makes a study of the provincial languages easier than otherwise. It is the language in which our forefathers thought and wrote. No Hindu boy or girl should be without a knowledge of the rudiments of Sanskrit, if he will imbibe the spirit of his religion.[12]

8. To Students

Taking things as they are, we have to consider what is possible for the students to do and what more we can do in order to serve the country. The answer that has come to me and to many, who are eager to see that the student world gives a good account of itself, is that the students have to search within and look after their personal character. Purity of personal life is the one indispensable condition for building a sound education. And my meetings with thousands of students and the correspondence, which I continuously have with the students in which they pour out their innermost feelings and take me into their confidence, show me quite clearly that there is much left to be desired. . . . The end of all knowledge must be building up of character.[1]

As I was studying Christianity, Hinduism, and other great faiths of the world, I saw that there was a fundamental unity moving amidst the endless variety that we see in all religions. *viz.*, Truth and Innocence. You must take the word 'Innocence' literally, that is, to mean non-killing and non-violence; and if you, boys, will take your stand defiantly always

on Truth and Innocence, you will feel that you have built on solid foundation.[2]

Truthfulness is the master-key. Do not lie under any circumstances whatsoever. Keep nothing secret, take your teachers and your elders into your confidence and make a clean breast of everything to them. Bear ill-will to none, do not say an evil thing of anyone behind his back; above all, 'to thine ownself be true' so that you are false to no one else. Truthful dealing, even in the least little things of life, is the only secret of a pure life.[3]

So, I say to the boys and girls : Never lose faith in God, and therefore, in yourselves; and remember that if you allow refuge to a single evil thought, a single sinful thought, remember that you lack that faith. Untruthfulness, uncharitableness, violence, sensuality—all these things are strangers to that faith. Remember that we have in this world no enemy greater than ourselves. The *Bhagavad Gita* proclaims it in almost every verse. If I was to sum up the teaching of the *Sermon on the Mount,* I find the same answer. My reading of the *Quran* has led me to the same conclusion. No one can harm us so much as we can ourselves. If you are, therefore, brave boys and brave girls, you will fight desperately and valiantly against the whole brood of these thoughts. No sinful act was ever done in this world without the prompting of a sinful thought. You have to exercise strict vigilance over every thought welling up in your breast.[4]

I have experimented with quite a number of boys in order to understand how best to impart religious instruction, and whilst I found that book instruction was somewhat of an aid, by itself it was useless. Religious instruction, I discover-

ed, was imparted best by teachers living the religion themselves. I have found that boys imbibe more from the teachers' own lives than they do from the books that they read to them, or the lectures that they deliver to them with their lips. I have discovered, to my great joy, that boys and girls have unconsciously a faculty of penetration whereby they read the thoughts of their teachers. Woe to the teacher who teaches one thing with his lips, and carries another in his breast.[5]

All your scholarship, all your study of Shakespeare and Wordsworth would be in vain, if at the same time you do not build your character and attain mastery over your thoughts and actions. When you have attained self-mastery and learnt to control your passions, you will not utter notes of despair.[6]

We are inheritors of a rural civilization. The vastness of our country, the vastness of the population, the situation and climate of the country have, in my opinion, destined it for a rural civilization. Its defects are well-known, but not one of them is irremediable. To uproot it and substitute for it an urban civilization seems to be an impossibility, unless we are prepared by some drastic means to reduce the population from three hundred million to three, or say even thirty. I can, therefore, suggest remedies on the assumption that we must perpetuate the present rural civilization, and endeavour to rid it of its acknowledged defects. This can only be done if the youth of the country will settle down to village life. And if they will do this, they must reconstruct their life and pass every day of their vacation in the villages surrounding their colleges or high schools, and those who have finished their education, or are not receiving any, should think of settling down in villages. Let them penetrate the villages and find an unlimited scope for service, research and true know-

ledge. Professors would do well not to burden either boys or girls with literary studies during the vacation, but prescribe to them educative outings in the villages. Vacations must be utilized for recreation, never for memorizing books.[7]

Students must devote a part of their spare time, if not the whole, to the service of thousands of Harijans.....I have found that, if I get many helpers who can give their spare time, much work can be done.....

This problem cannot be tackled by hired labour. No amount of money can enable me to do this. It must be your prerogative. It is an acid test of the education received by you in schools and colleges. Your worth will not be measured by your ability to make faultless English speeches. Your worth will be measured by the service you render to the poor, and not by Government posts, worth Rs. 60 or Rs. 600 that you may have got. I wish you would do this work in the spirit I suggest. I have not met a single student who has said that he cannot spare one hour per day. If you write your diary from day to day, you will find that you waste many a precious hour in the 365 days of the year. If you want to turn your education to good account, you will turn your attention to this work..... It is hard but pleasurable. It will give you joy, greater than your cricket or tennis .... I would ask you to pledge yourselves to devote a definite number of spare hours to Harijan service.[8]

All true scouts have my blessings. In my many wanderings over many parts of the world, I have come in contact with thousands of boy-scouts. True scouts are brave, considerate, courteous, and intelligent. They should have a full sense of their duty. They have been working to preserve order at the numerous fairs in the country where millions

gather. I would also like them to give a part of their time to the service of the Harijans. Anyone who sees Harijan quarters with my eye will be convinced that there is ample scope for service for all who have the will and the capacity to do it. It does not require extraordinary intelligence. The only thing required is a sense of identification with the Harijans.[9]

I think, I have written often enough against strikes by students and pupils, except on the rarest of occasions. I hold it to be quite wrong on the part of students and pupils to take part in political demonstrations and party politics. Such ferment interferes with serious study and unfits students for solid work as future citizens.[10]

I have a special claim upon the students and they upon me, for I regard myself still as a student and also because, from the very commencement of my return to India, I have been in close touch with them and many of them have served the cause of *Satyagraha*. Therefore, even if the whole of the student world were to repudiate me for causes, which in their very nature must be temporary, I am not going to be deterred from tendering my advice for fear of rejection.

Students cannot afford to have party politics. They may hear all parties, as they read all sorts of books, but their business is to assimilate the truth of all and reject the balance. That is the only worthy attitude that they can take. Power politics should be unknown to the student world. Immediately they dabble in that class of work, they cease to be students and will, therefore, fail to serve the country in its crisis..... Let them, therefore, think fifty times before rejecting my advice.[11]

Q. What is your goal in education when India obtains Self-rule ?

A. Character-building. I would try to develop courage, strength, virtue, the ability to forget oneself in working towards great aims. This is more important than literacy; academic learning is only a means to this great end.[12]

VII. FOR THE GOOD OF THE INDIVIDUAL

"He who loses himself finds God." If we understand the significance of this, we do not really need to know any more . . . . . All work will, then, be undertaken not for oneself, but for all.[1]

In the mighty world, man, considered as an animal, occupies but an insignificant place. Physically, he is a contemptible worm. But God has endowed him with intellect and the faculty of discrimination between good and evil. If we use this faculty to know God, we become a power for good. Abuse of that talent converts us into an instrument of evil so that we become like scourge and a plague and fill this earth with strife and bloodshed, and unhappiness and misery.[2]

In my humble opinion, fearlessness is the first thing indispensable before we could achieve anything permanent and real. This quality is unattainable without religious consciousness. Let us fear God and we shall cease to fear man. If we grasp the fact that there is a Divinity within us which witnesses everything we think or do, and which protects us and guides us along the true path, it is clear that we shall cease to have any other fear on the face of the earth save the fear of God.[3]

Fearlessness is the first requisite of spirituality. Cowards can never be moral.[4]

We often confuse spiritual knowledge with spiritual

attainment. Spirituality is not a matter of knowing scriptures and engaging in philosophical discussions.

It is a matter of heart culture, of unmeasurable strength.[5]

A life of goodness is enjoined upon us, not because it will bring good to us, but because it is the eternal and immutable law of nature ..... Virtuous action consists in a strenuous pursuit of good merely for the sake of doing good .... The power to do good does not come to us from without. It exists always within us, and we have only to develop it by proper means. The highest moral law is that we should unremittingly work for the good of mankind.[6]

It is better to allow our lives to speak for us than our words ..... Faith does not admit of telling. It has to be lived and then it becomes self-propagating.[7]

Often does good come out of evil. But that is God's, not man's plan. Man knows that only evil can come out of evil as good out of good.[8]

If you return good for good only it is a bargain and carries no merit, but if you return good for evil, it becomes a redeeming force. The evil ceases before it, and it goes on gathering volume and momentum like a snowball till it becomes irresistible.[9]

No sacrifice is worth the name unless it is a joy. Sacrifice and a long face go ill together. Sacrifice is "making sacred". He must be a poor specimen of humanity who is in need of sympathy for his sacrifice. It will not last.[10]

Joy lies in the fight, in the attempt, in the suffering

involved, not in the victory itself. For victory is implied in such an attempt.[11]

A man is but the product of his thoughts; what he thinks, he becomes.[12]

Happiness after all is a mental state and for myself being used now for more than a generation to a hard life I have learnt to detach my happiness from my surroundings.[13]

Man becomes great exactly in the degree in which he works for the welfare of his fellowmen.[14]

Work done spontaneously and joyfully is never oppressive.[15]

If a man is absorbed in his work, he will not feel the burden of it; it will not therefore wear him down. But if he takes no delight in it, even a little work will be too much for him. For a man in prison a day is as long as a year; for the sensualist a year is as a day. I was soon tired of European music when I heard it before, but now I understand and appreciate something of it.[16]

Inborn humility can never remain hidden and yet the possessor is unaware of its existence.[17]

Q. What is the meaning of reducing ourselves to zero ?

A. It means to be the last in receiving good things, to serve everyone, not to expect gratitude and to be the first in suffering. One who thus reduces himself to zero will always be absorbed in his work.[18]

The art of dying bravely and with honour does not need any special training, save a living faith in God.[19]

Man and his deed are two distinct things. Whereas a good deed should call forth approbation and a wicked deed disapprobation, the doer of the deed, whether good or wicked, always deserves respect or pity as the case may be.[20]

. . . . . Man cannot do right in one department of life whilst he is occupied in doing wrong in another department. Life is one indivisible whole.[21]

There will never be equality so long as one feels inferior or superior to the other. There is no room for patronage among equals.[22]

Immediately we begin to think of things as our opponents think of them, we shall be able to do them full justice. I know that this requires a detached state of mind, and it is a state very difficult to reach. Nevertheless for a *satyagrahi* it is absolutely essential. Three-fourths of the miseries and misunderstandings of the world will disappear, if we step into the shoes of our adversaries and understand their standpoint. We will then agree with our adversaries quickly or think of them charitably.[23]

It is a bad habit to say that another man's thoughts are bad and ours only are good and that those holding different views from ours are the enemies of the country.[24]

Let us honour our opponents for the same honesty of purpose and patriotic motives that we claim for ourselves.[25]

It is true that I have often been let down. Many have deceived me and many have been found wanting. But I do not repent of my association with them. For I know how to non-cooperate, as I know how to cooperate. The most practical, the most dignified way of going on in the world is to take people at their word, when you have no positive reason to the contrary.[26]

Our motto must ever be conversion by gentle persuasion and a constant appeal to the head and the heart. We must, therefore, be ever courteous and patient with those who do not see eye to eye with us. We must resolutely refuse to consider our opponents as enemies of the country.[27]

A fault is a bad thing; therefore, we should be ashamed of it. But to admit and ask pardon for a fault is a good thing. Therefore, we should not feel shame in doing so. To ask pardon for a fault implies a determination not to default any more. Is such determination something to be ashamed of?[28]

To err is human. By confessing we convert our mistakes into stepping stones for advance. On the contrary, a person who tries to hide his mistakes becomes a living fraud and sinks down.[29]

A clean confession, combined with a promise never to commit the sin again, when offered before one who has the right to receive it, is the purest type of repentance.[30]

Confession of error is like a broom that sweeps away dirt and leaves the surface cleaner than before. It is million times better to *appear* untrue before the world than to be untrue to ourselves.[31]

There is no discredit greater than the refusal to acknowledge errors.[32]

It is the duty of him who claims to serve humanity not to be angry with those whom he is serving.[33]

A burning passion coupled with absolute detachment is the key to all success.[34]

Fight, if you must, on the path of righteousness and God will be with you. There is no royal road, I repeat, to gaining your rights, except self-purification and suffering.[35]

But self-control to be self-control must brace one up. It becomes mechanical or superimposed when it unnerves or saddens one.[36]

Man will ever remain imperfect, and it will always be his part to try to be perfect.[37]

All truths, not merely true ideas, but truthful faces, truthful pictures, or songs, are highly beautiful. People generally fail to see beauty in truth, the ordinary man runs away from it and becomes blind to the beauty in it. Whenever men begin to see beauty in truth, then true art will arise.

Truly beautiful creations come when right perception is at work. If these moments are rare in life they are also rare in art.[38]

I drive the truth home, so that from the brain it may percolate to the heart. So long as it remains in the brain only, it is a dead weight on it. Any truth received by the brain must immediately be sent down to the heart. When it

is not, it suffers abortion and then it lies on the brain as so much poisonous matter. What poisons the brain, poisons the whole system. Hence, the necessity of using the brain, as it should be, merely as a transmitting station. Whatever is there received is either transmitted to the heart for immediate action, or it is rejected there and then as being unfit for transmission. Failure of the brain to perform this function properly is the cause of almost all the ills that flesh is heir to, as also for mental exhaustion.[39]

There is a class of people to which many of us belong. They read and read and read until they almost lose their power of thinking. To such people I suggest that they should stop reading and think over what they have previously read.[40]

The conquest of lust is the highest endeavour of a man or woman's existence. Without overcoming lust man cannot hope to rule over self. And without rule over self there can be no Swaraj or *Rama Raj*. Rule of all without rule of oneself would prove to be as deceptive and disappointing as a painted toy-mango, charming to look at outwardly but hollow and empty within. No worker who has not overcome lust can hope to render any genuine service to the cause of Harijans, communal unity, Khadi, cow-protection or village reconstruction. Great causes like these cannot be served by intellectual equipment alone, they call for spiritual effort or soul-force. Soul-force comes only through God's grace, and God's grace never descends upon a man who is a slave to lust.[41]

Now for the definition—the meaning—of *brahmacharya*. Its root meaning may be given thus : that conduct which puts one in touch with God.

The conduct consists in the fullest control over all the

senses. This is the true and relevant meaning of the word.

Popularly it has come to mean mere physical control over the organ of generation. This narrow meaning has debased *brahmacharya* and made its practice all but impossible. Control over the organ of generation is impossible without proper control over all the senses. They are all interdependent. Mind on the lower plane is included in the senses. Without control over the mind mere physical control, even if it can be attained for a time, is of little or no use.[42]

Brahmacharya must be observed in thought, word and deed. It may be harmful to suppress the body, if the mind is at the same time allowed to go astray. Where the mind wanders, the body must follow sooner or later.

It is necessary here to appreciate a distinction. It is one thing to allow the mind to harbour impure thoughts; it is a different thing altogether if it strays among them in spite of ourselves. Victory will be ours in the end, if we non-cooperate with the mind in its evil wanderings.[43]

Absolute renunciation, absolute *brahmacharya,* is the ideal state. If you dare not think of it, marry by all means, but even then live a life of self-control.[44]

Sex urge is a fine and noble thing. There is nothing to be ashamed of in it. But it is meant only for the act of creation. Any other use of it is a sin against God and humanity.[45]

If we begin to believe that indulgence in animal passion is necessary, harmless and sinless, we shall want to give reins to it and shall be powerless to resist it. Whereas if we educate ourselves to believe that such indulgence is harmful, sinful,

unnecessary, and can be controlled, we shall discover that self-restraint is perfectly possible.[46]

Life without *brahmacharya* appears to me to be insipid and animal-like. The brute by nature knows no self-restraint. Man is man because he is capable of, and only in so far as he exercises, self-restraint. What formerly appeared to me to be extravagant praise of *brahmacharya* in our religious books seems now, with increasing clearness every day, to be absolutely proper and founded on experience.[47]

I hold that a life of perfect continence in thought, speech and action is necessary for reaching spiritual perfection. And a nation that does not possess such men is poorer for the want.[48]

Married people should understand the true function of marriage and should not violate the law of *Brahmacharya* except with a view to having a child for the continuation of the race.[49]

This is a hard thing to do, but we have been born into this world that we might wrestle with difficulties and temptations, and conquer them; and he who has not the will to do it can never enjoy the supreme blessing of true health.[50]

I have always felt that much harm has been done by the narrow definition of *Brahmacharya*. If we practise simultaneous self-control in all directions, the attempt will be scientific and possible of success. Perhaps the palate is the chief sinner.[51]

Control of the palate is very closely connected with the

observance of *Brahmacharya*. I have found from experience that the observance of celibacy becomes very easy, if one acquires mastery over the palate.[52]

The earnest man who, forgetting the errors of the past, begins to live a life of purity, will be able to reap the fruit straightway. Those who have practised true *Brahmacharya* even for a short period will have seen how their body and mind improve steadily in strength and power and they will not, at any cost, be willing to part with this treasure.[53]

Man came into the world in order to pay off the debt owed by him to it, that is to say, in order to serve God and (or through) His creation. Keeping this point of view in front of him, man acts as a guardian of his body. It becomes his duty to take such care of his body as to enable it to practise the ideal of service to the best of its ability.[54]

Though death and life are the faces of the same coin, and though we should die as cheerfully as we live, it is necessary while there is life to give the body its due. It is a charge given to us by God. And we have to take all reasonable care about it.[55]

Laymen ought to acquire a workable knowledge of the body which plays such an important part in the evolution of the soul within. And yet about nothing are we so woefully negligent or ignorant, as in regard to our bodies. Instead of using the body as Temple of God, we use it as a vehicle for indulgence, and are not ashamed to run to medical men for help in our effort to increase them and abuse the earthly tabernacle.[56]

Perfect health can be attained only by living in obedience to the laws of God, and defying the power of Satan. True happiness is impossible without true health and true health is impossible without a rigid control of the palate. All the other senses will automatically come under control when the palate has been brought under control. And he who has conquered his senses has really conquered the whole world, and he becomes a part of God.[57]

All religions agree in regarding the human body as an abode of God. Our body has been given to us on the understanding that we should render devoted service to God with its aid. It is our duty to keep it pure and unstained from within as well as from without, so as to render it back to the Giver when the time comes for it, in the state of purity in which we got it. If we fulfil the terms of the contract to God's satisfaction, He will surely reward us and make us heirs to immortality.[58]

Indeed, the body may be a good servant, but, when it becomes a master, its powers of evil are unlimited.[59]

Civilization, in the real sense of the term, consists not in the multiplication, but in the deliberate and voluntary restriction of wants. This alone promotes real happiness and contentment, and increases the capacity for service.[60]

A certain degree of physical harmony and comfort is necessary, but above a certain level it becomes hindrance instead of help. Therefore, the ideal of creating an unlimited number of wants and satisfying them seems to be a delusion and a snare. The satisfaction of one's physical needs, even the intellectual needs of one's narrow self, must meet at a

certain point a dead stop, before it degenerates into physical and intellectual voluptuousness. A man must arrange his physical and cultural circumstances so that they do not hinder him in his service of humanity, on which all his energies should be concentrated.[61]

Man falls from the pursuit of the ideal of plain living and high thinking, the moment he wants to multiply his daily wants. History gives ample proof of this. Man's happiness really lies in contentment. He who is discontended, however much he possesses, becomes a slave to his desires. And there is really no slavery equal to that of his desires. All the sages have declared from the house-tops, that man can be his own worst enemy as well as his best friend. To be free or to be a slave lies in his own hands. And what is true for the individual, is true for society.[62]

Experience has taught me that silence is a part of the spiritual discipline of a votary of Truth. Proneness to exaggerate, to suppress or modify the truth, wittingly or unwittingly, is a natural weakness of man, and silence is necessary in order to surmount it.

A man of few words will rarely be thoughtless in his speech; he will measure every word.[63]

It (silence) has now become both a physical and spiritual necessity for me. Originally, it was taken to relieve the sense of pressure. Then, I wanted time for writing. After, however, I had practised it for some time, I saw the spiritual value of it. It suddenly flashed across my mind that that was the time when I could best hold communion with God. And, now, I feel as though I was naturally built for silence.[64]

He is truly silent who, having the capacity to speak, utters no idle word.[65]

VIII. THE HUMAN FAMILY

I am a humble servant of India and in trying to serve India, I serve humanity at large... After nearly fifty years of public life, I am able to say today that my faith in the doctrine that the service of one's nation is not inconsistent with the service of the world, has grown. It is a good doctrine. Its acceptance alone will ease the situation in the world and stop the mutual jealousies between nations inhabiting this globe of ours.[1]

God having cast my lot in the midst of the people of India, I should be untrue to my maker if I failed to serve them. If I do not know how to serve them I shall never know how to serve humanity. And I cannot possibly go wrong so long as I do not harm other nations in the act of serving my country.[2]

It is impossible for one to be internationalist without being a nationalist. Internationalism is possible only when nationalism becomes a fact, *i.e.* when peoples belonging to different countries have organized themselves and are able to act as one man.

It is not nationalism that is evil, it is the narrowness, selfishness, exclusiveness which is the bane of modern nations, which is evil. Each wants to profit at the expense of, and rise on the ruin of, the other. Indian nationalism has struck a different path. It wants to organize itself or to find full self-expression for the benefit and service of humanity at large.[3]

My mission is not merely brotherhood of Indian humanity. My mission is not merely freedom of India, though today it undoubtedly engrosses practically the whole of my life and the whole of my time. But through realization of freedom of India I hope to realize and carry on the mission of the brotherhood of man. My patriotism is not an exclusive thing. It is all-embracing and I should reject that patriotism which sought to mount upon the distress or the exploitation of other nationalities. The conception of my patriotism is nothing if it is not always, in every case without exception, consistent with the broadest good of humanity at large. Not only that, but my religion and my patriotism derived from my religion, embrace all life.[4]

My notion of *Purna Swaraj* is not isolated independence but healthy and dignified interdependence. My nationalism, fierce though it is, is not exclusive, not designed to harm any nation or individual. Legal maxims are not so legal as they are moral. I believe in the eternal truth of *'sic utere tuo ut alienum non loedas'* (Use thy own property so as not to injure thy neighbour's).[5]

Our nationalism can be no peril to other nations inasmuch as we will exploit none just as we will allow none to exploit us. Through *Swaraj* we would serve the whole world.[6]

There is no limit to extending our services to our neighbours across State-made frontiers. God never made those frontiers.[7]

We want freedom for our country, but not at the expense or exploitation of others, not so as to degrade other countries.

I do not want the freedom of India if it means the extinction of England or the disappearance of Englishmen. I want the freedom of my country so that other countries may learn something from my free country, so that the resources of my country might be utilized for the benefit of mankind. Just as the cult of patriotism teaches us today that the individual has to die for the family, the family has to die for the village, the village for the district, the district for the province and the province for the country, even so, a country has to be free in order that it may die, if necessary, for the benefit of the world. My love, therefore, of nationalism or my idea of nationalism is that my country may die, so that the human race may live. There is no room for race-hatred there. Let that be our nationalism.[8]

We are all tarred with the same brush; we are all members of the vast human family. I decline to draw any distinctions. I cannot claim any superiority for the Indians. We have the same virtues and the same vices. Humanity is not divided into water-tight compartments, so that we cannot go from one to another. They may occupy one thousand rooms, but they are all related to one another. I would not say, "India should be all in all, let the whole world perish." That is not my message. India should be all in all, consistently with the well-being of other nations of the world. I can keep India intact and its freedom also intact only if I have the good-will towards the whole of the human family and not merely for the human family which inhabits this little spot of the earth called India. It is big enough compared to other smaller nations, but what is India in the wide world or in the universe ?[9]

I venture to suggest in all humility that if India reaches

her destiny through Truth and Non-violence, she will have made no small contribution to the world peace for which all the nations of the earth are thirsting, and she would also have, in that case, made some slight return for the help that those nations have been freely giving to her.[10]

If I want freedom for my country, believe me, if I can possibly help it, I do not want that freedom in order that I, belonging to a nation which counts one-fifth of the human race, may exploit any other race upon earth, or any single individual. If I want that freedom for my country, I would not be deserving of that freedom if I did not cherish and treasure the equal right of every other race, weak or strong, to the same freedom.[11]

KEY TO SOURCES

Besides primary sources, the following compilations have been consulted in making the foregoing selections :

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Selections from Gandhi by Nirmal Kumar Bose and *Gandhi Series* by Anand T. Hingorani.

The following notes will indicate the source of each item. Grateful acknowledgement is made here of the help derived from these compilations.

ABP	*The Amrita Bazar Patrika*
Auto	*An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments With Truth,* by M. K. Gandhi, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.
BC	*Bombay Chronicle,* Bombay.
BLM	*Bapu's Letters to Mira,* Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.
CP	*Constructive Programme : Its Meaning and Place,* by M. K. Gandhi; Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.
DD	*Delhi Diary,* Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.
EF	*The Epic Fast,* by Pyarelal; Mohanlal Bhatt, Ahmedabad.
ER	*Ethical Religion;* Mahatma Gandhi; S. Ganesan, Madras.
FYM	*From Yeravda Mandir : Ashram Observances;* M. K. Gandhi; Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.

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POLAK	*Mr. Gandhi, the Man,* Millie Graham Polak.
RCPS	*Report of the Commission Appointed by the Punjab Sub-Committee of the Indian National Congress,* published by K. Santanam, Lahore, 1920.
SL	*Selected Letters I,* Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.
SSA	*Satyagraha in South Africa,* M. K. Gandhi, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.
SWMG	*Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi;* G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras.
TNH	*Towards New Horizons,* Pyarelal; Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.
WGC	*With Gandhiji in Ceylon,* edited by Mahadev Desai; S. Ganesan, Madras.
YI	*Young India,* English weekly journal edited by Mahatma Gandhi.

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4. *H*, 6-5-1933
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6. *H*, 7-10-1939
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31. *H*, 25-3-1939
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48. *H*, 26-10-1947
49. *MGLP*, Vol. II, p. 324
50. *MGLP*, Vol. I, p. 562
51. *MGLP*, Vol. II, p. 766
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53. *YI*, 12-7-1924
54. *YI*, 4-5-1921

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16. January, 1928*
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21. *YI*, 4-8-1927
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23. *YI*, 5-11-1925
24. Gandhiji quoted by M.N. Chatterjee in *Community Service News*, Sept.-Oct., 1946, p. 4
25. *H*, 2-11-1934
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29. *YI*, 27-6-1926
30. *YI*, 13-11-1924

*Statement made by Mahatma Gandhi at the Assembly of the Council of the Federation of International Fellowship at Sabarmati.

31. *Prayer speech*, 20-12-1947
32. *H*, 16-11-1934
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43. *Mahatma*, Vol. VIII, p. 88

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